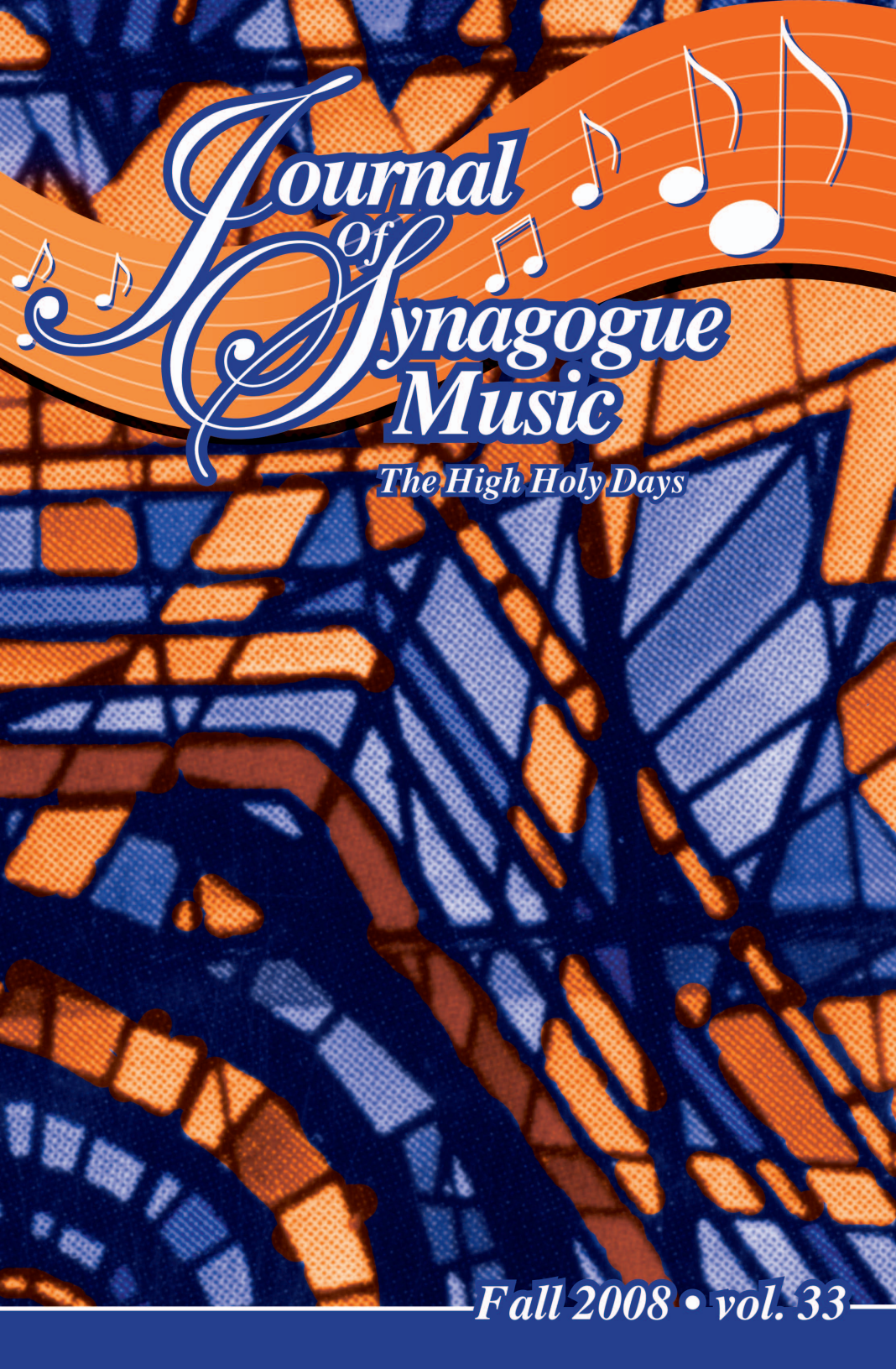

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EDITOR: Joseph A. Levine

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The **Journal of Synagogue Music** is published annually by the Cantors Assembly. It offers articles and music of broad interest to the hazzan and other Jewish professionals. Submissions of any length from 1,000 to 10,000 words will be considered.

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Footnotes are used rather than endnotes, and should conform to the following style:

> A - Abraham Idelsohn, *Jewish Liturgy* (New York: Henry Holt), 1932: 244.
>
> B - Samuel Rosenbaum, "Congregational Singing;" *Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Convention* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary), February 22, 1949: 9-11.

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Journal of Synagogue Music
Vol. 33 • Fall 2008

FROM THE EDITOR:

ASPECTS OF *YAMIM NORA'IM*

A LITERARY GLIMPSE

D'VAR N'GINAH

D'VAR K'RI'AH

MAIL BOX

NUTS AND BOLTS

REVIEWS

Point/Counterpoint:

MUSIC

SIX HIGH HOLIDAY SETTINGS BY ISRAELI COMPOSERS— IN CELEBRATION OF ISRAEL'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Issue of The High Holidays: How They Affect American Synagogue Practice the Rest of the Year

In his landmark study of High Holiday liturgy (from which a chapter is excerpted in this *Journal)* Hayyim Kieval states that the Torah,

> explicit in its description of the worship of the tenth day, Yom HaKippurim, is silent about any connection between it and the first day of the seventh month, aside from their calendrical proximity and similar sacrifice offerings (Numbers 29: 1-11). This reticence is remarkable in view of the fact that throughout talmudic literature, and especially in the liturgy of the synagogue, Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur are represented as integral parts of one whole.[1]

Rabbi Kieval saw how the solemnity of the Day of Atonement gradually flowed backward in time onto "the original festive joy of the biblical first day of the seventh month"[2] and ultimately engulfed the interval between those two separate events, which was turned into the Ten Days of Penitence.[3] This despite the absence of any direct mention of penitence in the *matbei 'a* prayers of Rosh HaShanah. Each of these two Holidays—before being raised to "High" status—was unique unto itself: *sui generis.*

The same may be said about all 5.5 million of us who declared ourselves "Jews by Choice" on various national population surveys taken during the past decade in the United States.[4] Living in a democratic society, America's Jews enjoy doing their own cultural thing. That extends to religion as well, claimed the late historian Arthur Hertzberg.

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1 Hayyim (Herman) Kieval, *The High Holidays,* David Golinkin & Monique Susskind Goldberg, editors (Jerusalem: The Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies), 2004: 232.

2 Numbers 10: 10; Nehemiah 8: 9-10.

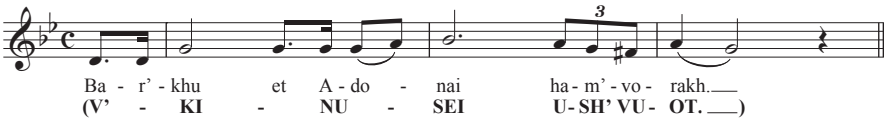
3 Kieval, op. cit., p. 233; BT *Rosh HaShanah,* 17b

4 National Population Surveys were taken by: Barry Kosman (New York: Council of Jewish Federations,1990); Sidney Goldstein (New York: City University of New York, 1993); Gary Tobin (Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis Institute for Community and Religion, 1997).

> The immigrants wanted to give to their Jewishness the aroma of the religious tradition and of folk memory, but on the condition that they could decide on what they wanted to keep and remember.[5]

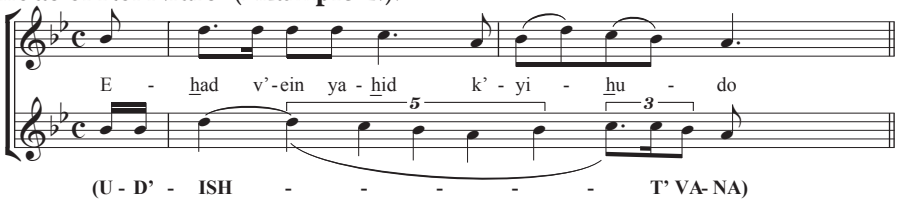
And what *did* they remember—those sweatshop laborers who could never observe the *Shabbos* of their childhood in a six-day work week whose official Sabbath was the Christian Sunday? They remembered Yom Kippur! It had "so sacred a resonance," wrote social critic Irving Howe, that the immigrant generation "felt that to go to *shul* then was to confirm one's identity as a Jew."[6] The echoes of that sacred resonance could be heard all during the rest of the year, permeating the observance of every other liturgical occasion.

From lack of awareness and an absence of accessible role models, our laity has been painting Weekday Arvit with the musical coloring of Erev Shabbat whenever asked to lead a Minyan in observance of a parent's yahrzeit. The prevailing nusah for Friday Night *Bar'khu*[7]—the hazzan's Call to Prayer—is actually a S'lihah mode better suited to Erev Yom Kippur (**Example 1.**—words of Kol Nidre are parenthesized).



Example 1. *Friday Night Bar'khu in a* ***S'lihah*** *mode paraphrasing* ***Kol Nidre.***

When offering glory to God in hymns like *Yigdal*[8]—"No unity like unto His can be, Eternal, unconceivable is He"—we sing it as well in the Forgiveness mode of Kol Nidre[9] (**Example 2.**).



Example 2. *The glory hymn* ***Yigdal,*** *sung in the Forgiveness mode of Kol Nidre.*

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5 Arthur Hertzberg. *The Jews in America* (NY: Simon & Schuster), 1989: 5.

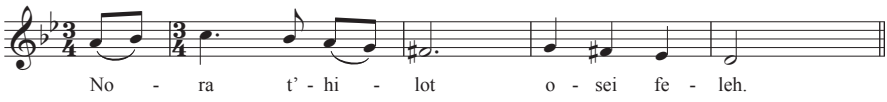
6 lrving Howe. *World of Our Fathers* (New York: Simon & Schuster), 1976: 191

7 *Sabbath Service in Song—Friday Evening,* ed., Gershon Ephros (New York: Behrman House), 1955: 20.

8 Melody by Meyer Leoni (London, 1760), charted with folk-song parallels in Abraham Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Music* (New York: Henry Holt), 1929: 222-224, line 6.

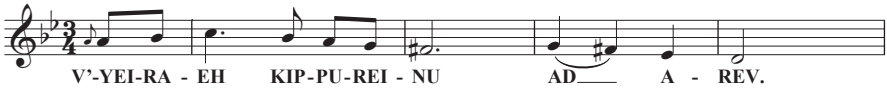
9 Henry A. Russotto's arrangement in Gershon Ephros, ed., *Cantorial Anthology,* vol. II (New York:\: Bloch Publishing), 1940: 6.

And we blithely apply the S'lihah mode to Friday night without causing the sky to fall or placing our first-born in danger of heavenly retribution. Because in our blissful unawareness we are deeply stirred—and often shaken—by a mismatch that only American Jews could have come up with. We say *Mi Khamokha*—Who is like unto You? Revered in praises, doing marvels—and we sing this laudation *penitentially* (**Example 3.**).[10]



Example 3. *Ending of laudatory Mi* ***Khamokha*** *sung in a penitential mode.*

We convert God's triumph at the Reed Sea *(Shirat HaYam;* Exodus 15: 11) to supplication, wailing this ecstatic paean to the ending of a melody for *Ya 'aleh*[11] (Let our pleading rise up at night) from the S'lihot section of Kol Nidre Night: "May our forgiveness arrive at evening"(**Example 4.**)



Example 4. *Ending of* ***Ya'aleh,*** *from the* ***S'lihot*** *section of Kol Nidre night.*

It's not only amateurs who spread High Holiday angst over the Sabbath liturgy. The two leading American cantorial schools have been teaching this nusah to generations of future career cantors for over half a century. This is evidenced in student material published by two world-class Traditional cantors who lectured at the Hebrew Union College's School of Sacred Music, Adolph Katchko[12] and Israel Alter.[13] By furthering indiscriminate use of a mode heretofore reserved for penitential prayer we have let in daylight upon the magic that formerly surrounded the Days of Awe.

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10 From a staple of the so-called "Young Israel Tunes" repertoire, a body of congregational melodies introduced—from around 1920 on—by a national chain of Modern Orthodox synagogues that fostered worshipers' active participation through communal singing; notated from my recollection of this refrain as sung in the Young Israel Synagogue of Boro Park, Brooklyn, New York, ca. 1945.

11 After Aron Friedmann, *Schir Lisch'laumau* (Berlin: Deutsch-Israelitischen Gemeindesbunde), 1901, no. 405-1.

12 Adolph Katchko, *Thesaurus of Cantorial Liturgy* (New York: Hebrew Union School of Education and Sacred Music), 1952.

13 Israel Alter, *The Sabbath Service* (New York: The Cantors Assembly), 1968.

To help recapture the awe and wonder of our High Holidays we offer an array of articles that examine **ASPECTS OF YAMIM NORA'IM** from the preparatory S'lihot service (**Jaclyn Chernett**) to the anatomy of S'lihot sections throughout Yom Kippur (**Joseph A. Levine**), from the distinctive liturgies of Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur including the unique "Permissions" asked by cantors before each section of prayer (**Saul Wachs, Hayyim Kieval** and **Akiva Zimmermann**) to their connection with Yiddish theater (**Gershon Freidlin**), from psychoanalytical and literary views of the *Akedah* protagonists (**Dennis G. Shulman, Eliezer Steinman**) to a musicological analysis of High Holiday prayer mode extensions (**Boaz Tarsi**), from the theology of *U-n'taneh Tokef (***Neil Gillman**) to the antiquity of Kol Nidre (**Johanna Spector**).

A LITERARY GLIMPSE presents—almost in its entirety—*The Day of Atonement,* an early-20th century short story by Sampson Raphaelson that launched "The Jazz Singer" on Broadway and as Hollywood's first talking movie.

D'VAR N'GINAH examines a challenging setting of Ps. *27—Adonai Ori V'-Yish'i*—by contemporary composer Aaron Blumenfeld.

D'VAR K'RI'AH gives the background and transcription of Penitential Torah reading as gleaned from many sources including the classroom notes of Solomon Rosowsky, who taught cantillation at the Jewish Theological Seminary's Cantors Institute.

MAIL BOX contains reaction to the *Journal*'s 2007 issue and its feature section on the Khazntes, as well as reports on the current synagogue scene in France, Germany, England, and the former Soviet Union.

REVIEWS cover recent High Holiday musical anthologies (Sol Zim) and recorded services (Moshe Ganchoff) and settings (Meir Finkelstein), plus books on the Copenhagen Synagogue's liturgical tradition (Jane Mink Rossen & Uri Sharvit), and the history and nature of Jewish Music (Emanuel Rubin & John Baron; and Charles Heller).

Our 2008 **MUSIC** section offers six High Holiday settings by Israeli composers, one to celebrate each decade of the Jewish State's existence.

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Finally, we note the passing of Masha Benya (1932-2007), the most giving of Yiddish folk singers, best remembered for her 1956 collaboration with Sidor Belarsky in a WEVD radio series, *Amol iz geven a mayse* ("Once Upon a Time.")

Joseph A. Levine

Max Kadushin and the Distinctive Liturgy of the *Yamim ha-Nora'im*

by Saul P. Wachs

Introduction

Max Kadushin, one of the most creative scholars ever nurtured by the Conservative movement, helped us to understand the rabbinic mind and the ways in which rabbinic Judaism modified the religion of Biblical Israel.[1] Two of the major tools with which he analyzed Rabbinic thought were "value concepts" and "emphatic trends."[2]

Value Concepts

Value concepts are nouns that cannot be denotatively defined, that is, they have a range of meanings. For example, Kadushin found that the value-concept of דרך ארץ can refer to practical wisdom, good manners, moral behavior and sexual intercourse.[3] תורה is another example of a value concept which has many referents. As the name implies, value concepts are not neutral, they are positive (e.g. חסד, אמת) or negative (e.g. עבודה זרה, שפיכות דמים), that is, they have both a cognitive and an evaluative component. While such terms exist in every language (e.g. democracy, love, courage, mensch), classical Jewish value concepts are always in Hebrew and therefore they were retained in all of the languages that Jews have spoken, including Yiddish and Ladino. Value concepts have a drive for concretization. Thus, for example, we concretize the value concept of ברכה by reciting a ברכה; we concretize the value concept

1 Max Kadushin, *The Rabbinic Mind* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary 1952). Max Kadushin, *Worship and Ethics* (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1964). For a readable summary of Kadushin's ideas, see Theodore Steinberg, "Max Kadushin, Scholar of Rabbinic Judaism," unpublished doctoral dissertation, New York University, 1980.

2 On "value concepts" see *Worship and Ethics*, Chapter one. On "emphatic trends, see *Worship and Ethics*, pp.11-13. On "normal mysticism," see *Worship and Ethics*, pp 13-17.

3 Ibid. Chapter three.

of צדקה by giving צדקה, etc. Finally, value concepts function as theological building blocks that are organically related. The meaning of any particular concept depends on its relationship to the other concepts.[4]

Emphatic Trends

A second felicitous term used by Kadushin is "emphatic trends." By this, he means that the rabbis sometimes gave greater emphasis to certain ideas than is found in the Bible. Among these he includes love, the individual and universality.[5]

Normal Mysticism

A third major term coined by Max Kadushin is "normal mysticism." Rabbinic Judaism did not validate poverty, asceticism, celibacy, personal isolation or the use of mind-altering substances, all of which have had a place in the way in which certain cultures seek to encounter the Divine. Normal mysticism, as Kadushin uses the term, refers to the belief of the rabbis that people could experience God's presence and a sense of the transcendent in normal everyday experience.[6] Such moments can occur in prayer and the performance of Mitzvot, in study and the enjoyment of God's world (which calls forth a ברכה), and (according to one opinion, at least) even in the act of making love.[7] The experience of God's presence is a private experience and is therefore mystical in essence and it was not seen as limited to rabbis but was available to all.[8]

This article will briefly examine some aspects of the liturgy of the ימים הנוראים in the light of Max Kadushin's ideas, plus an additional idea of my own:

The Liturgy as a Censored Body of Ideas.

From the time of Yavneh in the late 1st century C.E., if not earlier, an attempt was made to protect mandated liturgy (תפילה של מטבע) from heretical ideas. Possibly influenced by a model found in Deuteronomy (26: 1-11; a minutely scripted ceremony for offering first fruits upon entering the land), the rabbis utilized liturgy as a way of *teaching* the basic ideas of (Pharisaic) Judaism.

4 See on this ibid. pp. 2-3. Value concepts sometimes are found in the Bible though often not in noun form. Sometimes, they take on different meanings than their biblical meaning (e.g. עולם ,גוי ,נס).

5 Ibid. pp. 26ff.

6 *Worship and Ethics*, pp. 13ff.

7 Talmud Bavli, *Berakhot* 57b.

8 Kadushin ibid.

Particularly as other interpretations of Judaism circulated, the liturgy was utilized as a way of polemically combating ideas that were seen as inimical to Judaism as they understood and taught it. Thus, for example, two related ברכות, ברכת אשר יצר and ברכת אלוהי נשמה offer a very different image of the human being than was taught (and continues to be taught) in some other religious and philosophical traditions.

The Image of God: מידת הדין and מלכות שמים

According to Kadushin, two value-concepts are central to the rabbi's image of God. The first is מידת רחמים, God's love.[9] This quality of divinity is seen as dominant and it is attached to the Tetragrammaton, which is, of course, God's most important name. This is based on a well known proof-text, which is recited many times during the סליחות.[10] The basic notion is that God recognized soon after the creation of the world, that the world cannot be governed by strict justice if it is to survive and so God introduced the quality of mercy, love and compassion. As is well known, the rules of מדרש are both very flexible and very strict. They are flexible in allowing for the free rein of imagination but very strict in requiring that Midrashic interpretations be rooted in the text. In this case, the interpretation is based on the idea that the name of God in the first chapter of Genesis is Elohim (which in rabbinic theology is connected to מידת הדין) while in chapter two God is referred to as Hashem Elohim מידת רחמים. מידת הדין is not a major concept in the liturgy of weekday, Shabbat, and the festivals, though it certainly has a role.[11] The emphatic trend that focuses our attention on מידת רחמים is reflected in the reluctance of the rabbis to directly attribute suffering and punishment to God, sometimes resorting to elaborate and convoluted ways of deemphasizing God's role without directly limiting a description of divine power.[12]

In general, we call upon God's mercy and love rather than demanding justice. In this, the liturgy reflects the Midrash, with which it shares so many common elements. One striking example of the latter is found in the Midrash on Bereshit 18: 25, which turns Abraham's question—"shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?"— into a statement. The liturgy of the ימים הנוראים

9 Ibid. p. 4 and passim.

10 Exodus 34: 6-7 (truncated).

11 As noted above, the divine name אלוהים which is part of ברכות and many other prayers is connected with מידת הדין.

12 Two examples of this are the use of indirect language in the middle section of the ברכה, אשר יצר את האדם בחכמה and the remarkable truncation of the proof-text for מידת רחמים, Exodus 34: 6-7.

is different. While we reiterate our belief that God is merciful and forgiving, constantly repeating the שלוש עשרה מידות during the recitation of סליחות, we also are made mindful of God's role as sovereign and judge during the entire period of repentance. God is not only אבינו but also המלך המשפט.[13]

We begin the formal chanting of the שליח צבור for שחרית with the word המלך which traditionally is treated musically with elaborate and elongated chanting. The פיוטים surrounding ברכת יוצר אור as well as those in the עמידה focus on God's majesty and power though they are not lacking in occasional references to divine mercy.[14] Rosh HaShanah is called יום הדין and so it is not surprising that the value concept of מידת הדין is given particular emphasis at this time.

The Image of the Human Being

The image of the human being in the liturgy recited during the year, in general is hopeful. To take one striking example, the liturgy with which we begin each שחרית service, appears to be designed to heal the self-concept of the individual. With the exception of one passage from תנא דבי אליהו[15], which includes the confessional formulas that Rabbi Yohanan and Mar Samuel[16] recited during the service for Yom Kippur, the passages remind each individual of his or her own dignity. The first words of the day, מודה אני remind us of our ability to acknowledge and appreciate gifts of mind and heart, and of our relationship to God. The word אני appears in one form or another no

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13 This change in emphasis is reflected in the alteration of the חתימה of ברכת משפט (*Siddur Sim Shalom* for Weekdays, ((New York: The Rabbinical Assembly, The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, 2002)) p. 39, 125, 144), which removes the softening term of צדקה. The חתימה ,המלך המשפט combines both of the central images of God that make the liturgy of this period of the Jewish calendar distinctive.

14 See for example, *The High Holiday Prayer Book*, ed. Morris Silverman (New York: the Prayer Book Press, 1939, henceforth referred to as the Silverman Mahzor), pp. 61-66, 79, 82-88, 276, 280 and, of course ונתנה תוקף. In the *Mahzor for Rosh ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur*, ed. Jules Harlow, 1983 printing, (henceforth referred to as the Harlow Mahzor), the פיוטים known as יוצרות have been eliminated, (a questionable decision since in many congregations, the worshipers who appear for שחרית on the ימים נוראים tend to be the people with strong davening skills). The רשות, יראתי בפצותי on p. 132 and the פיוטים on pages 136-143 reflect the same emphasis.

15 118 (chapter 19, end)

16 Talmud Bavli, *Yoma* 87b: "Master of the Universe"; and "Truly, we have sinned," respectively.

fewer than twelve times in the מה טובו lectionary,[17] ברכת אשר יצר validates the body and the physical dimension of life; ברכת אלוהי נשמה validates the unique personality of the individual.[18] It is described as being pure. The intra-personal theory of human nature and the close covenantal relationship of the human being and God are made explicit in the words recited as part of the סליחות הנשמה לך והגוף שלך—.

These passages are recited every day of the year; indeed, they are recited by pious Jews at home as part of the daily ritual of rising and are intended to create a certain frame of mind which combines self-respect and a keen awareness of the gifts of God. To quote Kadushin, "In most of the ברכות, the awareness of self is conceptualized through the concept of man…"[19] The value concept of אדם (which name in the Bible refers to Adam) in rabbinic thought refers to the human being. [20]

What is distinctive about the liturgy for the ימים הנוראים is the reiteration of an awareness of our fragility and the power of the יצר הרע. In addition to the confessions of Rabbi Yohanan and Mar Samuel noted above,[21] there are many texts that stress our unworthiness and our inability to ask for God's blessings based upon our deeds. Exemplars of this theme include the רשויות,[22] יראתי בפצותי,[23] and הנני העני ממעש,[24] as well as אבינו מלכינו and the various confessions that are repeated at each service of Yom Kippur (and during the סליחות recited prior to the ימים הנוראים). One of the best known פיוטים recited during these days, ונתנה תוקף,[25] reminds us of our fragility in graphic terms. "Man's origin is dust and his end is dust. He is like a clay vessel, easily broken, like withering grass…a vanishing dream). During the נעילה service, this awareness of human limitations reaches a climax in the prayer יד אתה נותן.[26] One almost feels the futility of ספר קוהלת in this text. All is futility and our sense of superiority to the beast is an illusion. Like the beast, we too

17 In what might well be a unique case in the סידור, Psalm 95: 6 is rewritten from the plural to the singular in this prayer.

18 The מפיק in the letter ה ending several words in the ברכה makes it clear that the soul that is given is distinctive and specific to the individual.

19 *Worship and Ethics*, p. 285 note 39.

20 In Rabbinic texts, Adam, is known as אדם הראשון.

21 See note 16.

22 Harlow, p.132.

23 Harlow, p.134

24 Harlow, pp. 236, 532.

25 Harlow, pp. 242 and 538.

26 Harlow, pp. 714-716.

are often ruled by passion and are overcome by desires that are (potentially) destructive.

תשובה

But there is another value concept that informs the liturgy of the ימים נוראים, which offers hope to us even as we acknowledge our unworthiness. This is the value-concept of תשובה. As far as we know, the concept of תשובה is a Jewish contribution to world culture. No other civilization in the ancient world had such a concept.[27] It was believed that for a god to change the divine intention would be a case of *lése majesté*. In fact, such an act was actually illegal in some cultures.[28]

There is no possibility of תשובה by Adam, Cain, the generation of Noah, or for that matter, Moses! The full text of Exodus 34: 6-7, makes it clear that God will *not* forgive sin. As pointed out by Jeffrey H. Tigay, the meeting ground between this view and a new view that (in rabbinic language) is called תשובה, is the book of Jonah, which is the הפטרה for the afternoon of יום כיפור. Jonah is the most successful prophet in Jewish history (he utters five Hebrew words and all of Nineveh repents!).[29] His response to his success is anger and displeasure. These are evil people, the enemies of his people and they must be punished. The author, speaking through the voice of God, represents the new view, the one that becomes normative in Judaism. These people are also God's children and many are innocent. If they have repented, then why should they die? *The idea that we are not locked into destructive patterns of behavior; that people can change, was and remains radical*. It underlies everything that we try to accomplish during the ימים הנוראים and is one of the most important rationales for prayer in general. The thrust of many of the climactic prayers and biblical citations found in נעילה makes it clear that Judaism believes God to desire our repentance and not our punishment.[30]

Normal Mysticism in the Liturgy

27 See on this. Jeffrey H. Tigay, "The Book of Jonah and the Days of Awe," *Conservative Judaism,* vol. 38 (2), winter 1985-6 and Saul P. Wachs, *Aleinu*: Rabbinic Theology in Biblical Language," *Conservative Judaism*, vol. 42 (1), Fall, 1989.

28 See, for example, מגילת אסתר 8: 8.

29 Jonah 3: 4 ("forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"). The rabbis see the repentance of the people of Nineveh as the paradigm of תשובה. See משנה תענית 2: 1 and *Worship and Ethics*, p. 266-7 note 78.

30 See, for example, אתה הבדלת (Harlow, p. 716, 742) and אלוהינו ואלוהי אבותינו מחל (Harlow, pp. 742-744, passim).

One source of mystical experience is the human capacity to be moved by sound. Many religions seek to stimulate such experience through the recitation of mantras. Our liturgy is not lacking in opportunities for such experience. In particular, the texts connected to ברכת יוצר אור are filled with "sound baths" that are centered in the use of rhyme, acrostic, alliteration, assonance and the use of pleonasms (i.e., excessive wordings).[31] In the יוצרות of the ימים הנוראים and in the פיוטים of the עמידה there is a virtual explosion of these linguistic and literary devices that can engulf the listener in an awareness of the numinous.[32] In particular, the פיוט, השם מלך exemplifies this feature of liturgy. When one examines the lines of this פיוט[33] it is clear that the author is not so much teaching theology as expressing through the playing with sound a sense of awe in the contemplation of God's majesty and sovereignty. The פיוט, מלך עליון, found in the מוסף service of ראש השנה[34] fits into the same category that I have chosen to refer to as a " liturgical sound bath." The radical surgery performed by the editors of Conservative liturgy on the פיוטים of the festivals and the High Holidays has minimized the opportunity for people to achieve that sense of the numinous, i.e. God's presence, that is mediated by envelopment in sounds that can touch the soul.

The Role of פיוט[35]

פיוט served and continues to serve many functions. It brought new music into the prayer experience. In its early period, it provided alternative versions of the statutory prayer texts. Later, it provided enrichment of these set texts. It also led to the development of new forms of Hebrew that allowed the language to grow and stretch its boundaries. As noted above, it also provided opportunities for worshippers to sense God's presence through envelopment

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31 See on this, Saul P. Wachs, "Some Reflections on Two Genres of Berakhah," *Journal of Synagogue Music*, vol. 22 (1-2), July/Dec. 1992, pp. 26-27.

32 Silverman, pp. 61-66, 80-88; *The Complete ArtScroll Machzor: Rosh HaShanah*, (Brooklyn, New York: Mesorah Publications Ltd., fifteenth impression, 1998, henceforth referred to as ArtScroll) pp. 268-276, 316-330.

33 Silverman, pp. 87-88; ArtScroll, pp. 328-330.

34 Silverman, pp.141-142; ArtScroll, pp. 478-480.

35 For a general discussion of פיוט see the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 13, pp. 573-602; Ismar Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy*, translated by Raymond P. Scheindlin (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1993) pp. 167-184.

in the sounds of the sacred tongue of the Jewish people. But there was one other role that פיוט was destined to play in the liturgy. It also allowed ideas that were not seen as appropriate for the מטבע של תפילה (required prayer texts) to be included in the service. I offer one example. כי הנה כחומר is one of the most beloved of all the פיוטים recited during יום כיפור. Set to music for חזן and choir, it is also a welcomed opportunity for congregational song, particularly during its refrain, לברית הבט ואל תפן ליצר.

What is the message of this poem? We are nothing but clay in the hands of the potter; cloth in the hands of the draper. We say to God in effect, "What do you expect from us; we are the way You made us!" A comforting idea on the day of final judgment, it does not seem consistent with the idea of personal autonomy that lies at the very heart of judgment. While arguing that we are without the power to shape our lives is not exactly a major theme of the High Holydays, it does offer a brief respite from the ongoing drumbeat of confession and acknowledgement of personal responsibility that shapes the ethos of the Day of Atonement.

Summary

Max Kadushin, perhaps more than anyone else, has provided us with a key to the workings of the rabbinic mind. His terms for rabbinic **Value Concepts** give us a language in which to understand the values and ideas that are stated or embedded in the liturgy. The majority of these concepts function as stimuli to ethical behavior. Our praise of God is an invitation to emulate the Divine attributes and a promise that this is possible if we make a determined effort to do so. Through the binary concepts of מידת רחמים and מידת הדין we are reminded that there are consequences to our behavior but that God also understands the forces that struggle within the human psyche. The value concept of מלכות שמים reminds us through the metaphor of Kingship, that our ultimate loyalty must be to God; that all other loyalties are subservient and that the ultimate definition of goodness is obedience to God's will. The value concept of תשובה offers us the promise that God's laws allow for human growth and change and challenges us to devote ourselves to the fulfillment of that task.

Kadushin's idea of **Emphatic Trends** teaches that the rabbis placed greater emphasis upon certain ideas and values than does the text of the Bible. One of these is the stress on universality; another, on the individual and a third on מידת רחמים. All of these, while important throughout the year, assume positions of centrality for us as we attempt to use the window in time provided by the

עשרת ימי תשובה to take stock of our lives, re-center ourselves and seek to use the time granted to us by the Almighty, to come closer to the ideal of קדושה that is the highest goal of our tradition, our faith and our community.

Finally, the idea of **Normal Mysticism** reminds us that a sense of God's presence is available if we are willing to take the time and invest the energy to seek that experience. Prayer services that see efficiency of schedule as the *ultimate* criterion of effectiveness rarely move people to the depths of religious experience. Intellectual preparation for worship through study of the liturgy, beautiful music and the opportunity to share in the singing of the prayers, teaching and preaching that challenges the mind and inspires the heart-; שליחי ציבור, to make of the prayer experience an opportunity for ordinary people to know that there is more to reality than what can be counted and weighed and measured and defined, to help them achieve an experience of Normal Mysticism. וכן יהי רצון.

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The Story of the *Akedah* *by Eliezer Steinman*

From the standpoint of its story alone the *Akedah* episode seems more like fable; its essence is missing. To begin with, the name of Mother Sarah never appears. Her offspring is being led to slaughter, yet she is never seen nor heard from. Where, indeed, is this compassionate mother who sheds not one bitter tear through the night before that fateful journey? Why did she not terrify the household with her angry bellows at first light as she watched her husband Abraham chop enough firewood for a sacrifice, saddle the donkey and complete all the many other preparations for his journey?

Mother Sarah, who should have played the leading role in this Passion, hides instead in shadow. Even after the event she is not mentioned, nor are we given a single hint as to whether she is alive or dead. It is as if a decree of complete silence has been passed upon her by Scripture. It is as if she too—along with Isaac—was led to the altar to be bound, the only difference being that Isaac's death sentence was annulled by a miracle while Sarah never saw the light of day again.

The truth of the matter is that anyone who reads this biblical episode recalls Mother Sarah and cannot forget for one instant how heartsick she must have been. Her voice cries out from the silence that hides her name, her moans punctuate every silence in the story. Sarah is slaughtered without a knife, her soul is consumed without fire. The whistle of the axe cleaving the gathered wood is clearly heard by the reader, who feels with each splitting thud, the mother's soul-shattering spasms as she swoons in fright.

Whether or not her son was actually slaughtered, his mother was the true sacrificial sheep, and common decency would dictate that her agony not be laid bare for the whole world to see. Words fail in the attempt to portray her terror as the moment for the offering approaches and she envisions the razor-sharp blade being laid against her only son's naked throat. Even the briefest description of that is too much! Besides, commentators from earliest times have sought to connect the prolonged tale of Isaac's Binding with the fleeting mention of Sarah's death that opens the very next chapter, intimating that upon learning of Isaac's fated sacrifice her soul departed and she expired.[1]

Even so, we ought not to imagine that a Gentile writer would have taken a similar tack with this story. We find no such self-imposed censorship and

1 *She's* the substitute; not the ram, a human consequence that can't be addressed by divine arithmetic.

rigorous silence among the realistic characters of well-known playwrights. Nor is there a novelist noted for his descriptive powers who could honestly claim, "if this were my plot I would be equally brutal in relinquishing all the favorite tools of my craft, all the brilliant touches that normally go into creating a scene where one soul confronts another, face to face."

How numerous are the portrayals that one would crowd into such a play? There is Abraham, the father figure who must bear witness while remaining silent. He listens, he obeys, but his countenance gives nothing away. The two lads who escort him; they too stand and wait for a touch of color from the painter's brush or an animating phrase from the writer's pen—that never comes. These walk-on roles have their function, which could reveal itself through a number of interjected speeches in a stage play. And yet, the two standbys in the *Akedah* story remain mute. Isaac himself—the sheep who occupies center stage—hardly opens his mouth. How then is he portrayed? By the proverbial "fear of Isaac?" Shouldn't we expect him to guess aloud, to stammer and stutter, at least to hint that he's *aware*?

No writer in the world would resist the urge to depict the donkey. This donkey of Abraham's that carries his son Isaac to the Place of Binding—is surely worthy of mention. Something could be made of him, even embellished! And it goes without saying that the landscape, and the sunrise that suddenly illuminates it and all that dwells therein, deserve the playwright's attention. Why are there no stage directions to suggest that the sun is shining brightly as the slaughterer goes about his appointed task and the gloriously radiant angel—God's emissary—appears beside the wide-eyed ram caught in a thicket, and above all, that this noonday light blinds the audience as it reflects off the upraised blade of the knife?

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Yes, the blade of the knife. Recall how fond the ancient Greek poets were of describing a priest as he whet the blade before performing a sacrifice, and what delight they took in tracking the wine-red blood as it fell in drops afterwards. What a wide gap stretches from that scene to the *Akedah* with its spare account of characters, the bleak situations in which they find themselves; the shocking acts they commit. What a fitting *mis en scène* for sharpening the tools of one's craft.

Yet, this is not where the biblical tale differs so starkly. For an artist didn't write it, but a visionary. No artisan and his crew raised its portals, but princes of wisdom, masters at capturing every nuance of human instinct including the noblest of them, the spirit of a song and the delight of a work of art. They were weavers of the mystery within a mystery. The Eye of Jacob (*Ein Ya'akov*)

stands apart, said Moses, the man of God. It remains alone in its gaze, in the way it observes things, objects, actions. Jacob's eye does not look favorably on artifice, make delicacies out of what life serves up, emphasize stressful situations for their shock value. The ancient Hebrew did not milk feelings.

Many seers arose in Israel but they did not stage plays; that was not their way. Ancient Judaism decreed against such presentation for the sole purpose of display; it avoided relating things as they occurred. Instead of reports they enabled succeeding generations to see the thing itself, its essence and emotions. Any presentation has a beginning and an end, and what takes place in it is determined by its ending. In the Jewish understanding, however, everything is marked with the stamp of eternity. There is nothing but being, a present tense that never ends. And this endless "now" has a name that is holy and awe-inspiring, a name that we are forbidden to pronounce. Even humankind's innermost feelings, the aches of our hearts that are forged in the furnace of being—these, too, are holy; to express them is to profane them.

Thus we find ourselves in a grave predicament, for how do we determine that art itself is not sinful? After all, at bottom it is concerned with expression, whose main preoccupation is with the steady stirring of passions. Anything private is spewn out for public consumption, but the genius of ancient Judaism insists on the hiding of blood. The artist, by contrast, habitually dips his brush in blood; show him a place where blood has been spilled and bodies mangled—there he is!

Assuredly, this matter splits our soul. Every one of us senses an element of desecration in the art of storytelling, of depiction. And to the extent that art symbolizes an altar it seems to descend involuntarily to the level of its own sacrificial offerings, embracing the tragic simply because it represents its daily bread. Still, we console ourselves with the conviction that art purifies all and atones for every sin. The ancient Hebrew did not share that opinion. He undermined any storytelling that tore the holy veil asunder for the sole purpose of revealing the emotional life and emptying the cauldron of the heart. His brush shunned the colors of blood and fire like a nazirite abstaining from forbidden drink.

In the *Akedah* story, this severe—almost monkish abstention—achieves an epitome that is unmatched by any playwright. In fact, there is nothing to indicate that it was written as a drama. Quite the opposite! Things happen here as if in semi-darkness (*k'va-alatah*). An unearthly silence mutes all speech and action. Every voice is still and small; deliberately so, in contrast to the bloodthirsty subject matter. A blade is poised in mid-stroke, about to slash a son in the midst of life—the son who was destined to guarantee the future

of Abraham's line. That blade chokes off all sound, prevents any utterance. A heavy curtain falls between stage and spectators, cutting short the slightest chance of frivolity, assuring that this drama will never be mistaken for a mere performance. Real life must never be put on display, just as sanctified death cannot be play-acted. The pages of Tanakh are not scripts, nor were the visions conjured by Hebrew Prophets seen as spectacles. If life was fated to become a sacrificial stage, in no way would an audience ever witness it; the stage of Isaac (*bamat **Yits**-ẖak*) was not meant to be a stage of laughter (*bamat **yis**-ẖak*). How could it be? From its beginnings Israel differed in everything. It forbade entertainments, frowned on games and discouraged overindulgence in strong feelings. The public showing of emotions as a pastime was out of the question.

In the *Akedah*, a mist encompasses everything. Abraham, Isaac, the two lads, the donkey, the angel, the blade, the altar, the sheep, the mountain—all are seen as if in a dream. Nothing evolves. Time itself dies and is no more—as if in a dream. Even the place fades away. God sends Abraham "to one of the mountains that I will tell you of"—the place is hidden. And shortly thereafter, "Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place from afar." Everything here remains at a distance. Even the sadness that penetrates human depth is distant. It is only hinted at, trembling in isolated words, in signs, in symbols. "Take now your son, your only son, the one you loved: Isaac." From the paucity of language, the scarceness of expression, erupts an abundance of words, every one of them a glowing coal—dagger-shaped—a blade!

Only in this one verse does the raging heart show emotion, convulsing in a rush of verbiage. And when it is over—again silence. Abraham, the two lads and Isaac trek in each other's company for three days, not a syllable falling between them. All communication is struck dumb: from humankind—from nature—not a whisper. Only silence—and though the heart bleeds, not a drop of blood in the tale. No orator takes up his theme in the Holy Book's pages—it is rather the visual impressions of all generations—speaking to us from the core of human existence. Do not call it destiny; certainly this is not an account in the normal sense. The biblical story is not a narrative about an event, it is *the event itself,* caught in dazzling clarity. Earthly existence is revealed to us in all its tangled complexity: the ram of humanity—and the humanity of the ram—both entangled in the thickets of a single dilemma. And only Isaac the saintly one asks, "but where is the sacrificial sheep?"

Is Isaac's question indeed as innocent as it seems? And yet, how could it be otherwise? Isaac, the intended offering, must be pure; the flesh-and-blood Isaac who has been led to the Place of Binding. Perhaps in his youthful innocence he is unaware, but as a biblical figure he is party to the unfolding

drama! He knows, or he guesses. Biblical heroes—especially our Patriarchs—are always given an extra measure, not just one but two. They are gifted in every area, including their speech. Every word bears a double meaning; every sound carries its own echo. The phrase "but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?" vibrates with innuendo. This is proven by what preceded it in the verse.

> Then Isaac said, "Father!" And Abraham answered, "Yes, my son." And Isaac said, "Here are the firestone and the wood, but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?"

The Hebrew Bible never repeats itself without cause. Even Abraham's reply can be understood in two different senses. And Abraham said, "God will provide the sheep for His burnt offering, my son." These words seem clear enough—but not entirely. They can also be read, "God will provide the sheep for His burnt offering: my son." Or, if you prefer, "God will provide the sheep; for His burnt offering: my son."

Indeed, father and son catch each other's meaning quite well, not from the words but from the echo-laden silences. Scripture continues: "So they went both of them together"—in perfect accord, of one heart and mind—equally fearful. In fact, the phrase "they went both of them together" occurs twice in this episode—following the lone dialogue and also preceding it, when Abraham first laid the wood across Isaac's back and took the knife in hand—as if to signal its dual meanings.

If we take into account all of the hints and hidden meanings and silences that get overlooked in the *Akedah* story, there would be no end to it. Yet, we would not be wrong in hypothesizing that many writing principles later codified in Hebrew literature have been laid down in the *Akedah* story. One of these tenets overshadows all others as a guiding light: the essence of imagination is to make a gift of life, and the essence of that making is to give the gift to others. Just so, telling a story allows others to consider their own actions before they act.

In a word—hiding your own voice in order to hear its heavenly echo—that is art.

Eliezer Steinman (1892-1970) was a leading figure in Israeli literary circles in the 1950s. He believed that the primary function of a critical essay is to improve man's view on life, and his ***B'eir HaHasidut*** *series of Hasidic tales gained the Lubavitcher Rebbe's support even though Steinman was an avowed secularist.*

With the collaboration of Dr. Scott Black, Assistant Professor of English Literature at the University of Utah, this essay is translated from ***Antologiyah Mikra'it—The Tanakh as Mirrored in Modern Hebrew Literature****, Gedalyah Elkoshi, ed. (Tel-Aviv: Dvir), 1953: 48-52.*

A Psychoanalytic Perspective on Abraham, Isaac and the Altar: Implications for Who We Are and How We Change

by Dennis G. Shulman

> What has once come to life clings tenaciously to its existence. One feels inclined to doubt sometimes whether the dragons of primeval days are really extinct.
>
> *Sigmund Freud, "Analysis Terminable or Interminable"*

No single narrative in Western literature has provoked the eruption of argument, controversy, creativity, interpretation and angst as Genesis 22: 1-19. In this biblical text, referred to by Jews as the *Akedah* (Hebrew for the binding), less than three hundred and fifty Hebrew words in all, the near-sacrifice of Isaac by his father is described. Sculptors, painters, poets, musicians, philosophers, theologians and commentators, in our and in ancient times, have struggled with the implications of God's ordering this murder. They have wondered and worried about what it was that happened when the aged Abraham, early that morning, rose, traveled for three days, took his beloved son to the mountain, bound him to the altar there, prepared him for the slaughter; and then, abruptly interrupted by a voice from heaven, substituted for his son a ram caught in the thicket.

The *Akedah* is a central narrative for all three Western religions. Although not mentioned in the remainder of the Tanakh, reference to Genesis 22 is abundant and central in the Talmud, midrash and the Jewish liturgy. The *Akedah* is one of the biblical texts read and discussed each year on Rosh HaShanah, the beginning of the most somber penitential period of the Jewish calendar.[1] According to the Talmud, it is because of the *Akedah* that Jews blow the ram's horn on this day in order to temper God's judgment. "Rabbi Abbahu asked, 'Why do we blow a ram's horn on the New Year?' The Holy One, blessed be He replied, 'So that I may remember on your behalf the binding of Isaac, the son of Abraham, and account it to you as if you had each bound yourself before Me.'"[2] This strong liturgical association of the binding of Isaac and God's forgiveness for the present-day Jew is repeated every morning in the synagogue. After reading the *Akedah*, included in the daily Orthodox prayer book, the worshipper prays, "Master of the world, may it be Your will that

1 For an interesting and scholarly examination of the rabbinic choice to read the *Akedah* on the second day of Rosh HaShanah, see Zlotowitz (1975).

2 BT *Rosh HaShanah* 17a. Also see *Genesis Rabbah* 56: 9.

You remember the covenant You made with our fathers. Even as Abraham, our father, held back his compassion from his only son and desired to slay him in order to do Your will, so may Your mercy hold back Your anger from us... Master of all worlds, it is not on account of our righteousness that we offer our supplications before You, but on account of Your great compassion. What are we? What is our life?... We are Your people... the children of Abraham, Your friend, to whom You made a promise on Mount Moriah [the setting for the *Akedah*]; we are the descendents of his only son, Isaac, who was bound on the altar."[3]

Christian art draws heavily on the Genesis text. Isaac and Jesus each carries his own altar wood to his slaughter. The ram substitute (stuck in the thicket by his horns) and Jesus each "wears" a crown of thorns. Mount Moriah, where Abraham brings his beloved son to sacrifice, and the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, where God brings his beloved son to be sacrificed, is, by biblical tradition, the same place.[4]

In the Koran, there is also an *Akedah* text. It reads:[5]

> Father Abraham said, "My Lord, grant me righteous children."
> God gave him good news of a good child.
> When Abraham grew enough to work with him, he said,
> "My son, I see in a dream that I am sacrificing you. What do you think?"
> His son said, "O my father, do what you are commanded to do.
> You will find me, God willing, patient."
> The Most Merciful never advocates evil.
> They both submitted, and Abraham put his son's forehead
> down to sacrifice him.
> God called him: "O Abraham. You have believed the dream."
> God thus rewards the righteous.
> That was an exacting test indeed.
> God ransomed his son by substituting an animal sacrifice.
> And God preserved his history for subsequent generations.
> Peace be upon Abraham.
> God thus rewards the righteous.
> He is one of our believing servants.

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3 Birnbaum (1949) pp. 22-24.
4 See 2 Chronicles 3: 1.
5 *Koran*, Sura 37: 100-111.

It is interesting to note that in the Koran text, Abraham's son is consulted and is a willing sacrifice. This is not the case in the Genesis narrative, although one finds a voluntary and informed Isaac in many midrashim[6], in the biblical interpretations of Josephus[7] and in the Book of Jubilees found in the Dead Sea Scrolls.[8] In these sources, Isaac, having been informed by his father what is to happen, asks his father to bind his hands tightly. Some of these texts were probably known to Muhammad. It is also important to consider that in the Arabic text of this story, the son's name is not specified. Some scholars wonder whether the son described in the Koran is Isaac or Ishmael.[9] By Muslim tradition, contrary to Genesis Chapter 21, Abraham does not banish Hagar (Sarah's handmaiden) and Ishmael (Abraham's oldest son) into the wilderness. Instead, Abraham travels with Hagar and Ishmael to Mecca to complete the sacrifice.

Infanticide (whether attempted or completed, ritual or motivated by other purposes, performed by fathers or their surrogates, practiced on both daughters and sons, on infants and older children) is a central motif found in much of the literature and mythology of the ancient and classical Near East. In the Hebrew Bible, the god to whom children were most frequently sacrificed by gentiles and refractory Israelites alike was Molokh, a Canaanite god of fire who originates from the third millennium BCE.

> [Next to the place] dedicated to the gentler gods had been erected a platform of movable stones under which a huge fire already raged. On the platform stood a stone god of unusual construction: it had two extended arms raised so that from the stone fingertips to the body they formed a wide inclined plane, but above the spot where they joined the torso there was a huge gaping mouth, so that whatever was placed upon the arms was free to roll swiftly downward and plunge into the fire. This was the god [Molokh]...
>
> Slaves heaped fresh [timber] under the statue, and when the flames leaped from the god's mouth, two priests grabbed one of the eight boys... and raised him high in the air. Muttering incantations they approached the outstretched arms, dashed the child upon them and gave the boy a dreadful shove downward, so that he scraped along the stony arms and plunged

6 For midrashim concerning Isaac as willing sacrifice, see Genesis Rabbah LVI: 8 and Ginzberg (1998).

7 Josephus (1960); *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book I, Chapter 13: 4.

8 Vermes (1996).

9 According to some older Muslim sources, Muhammad believed that the son Abraham almost sacrificed, as described in this Koran text, was Isaac, not Ishmael. See Hirschberg (1972).

> into the fire. As Molokh accepted him with a belch of fire there was a faint cry, then an anguished scream as the child's mother protested... The priests had noticed this breach of religious solemnity and were angry.[10]

Child sacrifice to this Canaanite god is explicitly referred to and vehemently denounced in the Hebrew Bible. In Leviticus, God commands Moses, "You shall say to the children of Israel,... or to the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that give of his seed to Molokh; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him... And if the people of the land hide their eyes from that man, when he gives of his seed to Molokh, and put him not to death; then I will set My face against that man, and against his family."[11] In 2 Kings, the text states, "And he defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom [the site for Molokh worship], that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molokh."[12]

Twelve hundred years after Abraham, Isaac and the altar, the prophets are still horrified and appalled by the Israelites who are sacrificing their children in Molokh's valley. Jeremiah states, "For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the Lord: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. And they have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart."[13] The prophets Ezekiel and Second Isaiah[14] further confirm Jeremiah's contention that feeding the children to the fiery Molokh was still practiced by Israelites up until the Babylonian exile and captivity.

Greek mythology, and the Athenian plays that draw on its heroes and themes as subjects, are also replete with child sacrifice.

> Child sacrifice to assure a favorable military outcome or fertile growing season, or to appease a god who has been offended was not uncommon in the ancient Near East. Plutarch, the Greek essayist and biographer, reported that ritual child sacrifice in the Roman Empire was still being practiced in his own time, as late as 115 CE.[15]

Two examples of this are Iphigenia and Oedipus.

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10 James Michener (1965) pp. 111-112. A similar scenario is described by Martin Bergmann (1992).

11 Leviticus 20: 2-5.

12 2 Kings 23: 10.

13 Jeremiah 7: 30-31.

14 See especially Ezekiel 16: 21, 20: 31, 23: 37; and Isaiah 57: 5. Also see Psalms 106: 37-38 & Micah 6: 7.

15 Rives (1995).

When unfavorable winds detained the Greek army at Aulis for days, prohibiting the ships from sailing into battle with the Trojans, the oracle Calchas told Agamemnon that he must sacrifice his daughter to appease the god Artemis, who Agamemnon had offended and who was the cause of the poor sailing weather. Misleading his daughter and wife Clytemnestra that Iphigenia was to be married to Achilles, the child sacrifice-bride was brought to Aulis. In one version of the myth, Agamemnon actually sacrificed her to Artemis. Interestingly, and reminiscent of the *Akedah*, in other versions of the same myth, in the final moment before Iphigenia was slaughtered by her father, the god Artemis took pity on her and substituted a deer on the altar. In this second version, Artemis then carried the young woman in a cloud to Tauris where she became the god's high priestess.

Euripides (485-406 BCE) drew on both versions of the myth in his two plays, "Iphigenia in Aulis" and "Iphigenia in Tauris."[16] In the latter work, Iphigenia describes her experience of *being* the sacrifice:

> Greek hands lifted me at Aulis
> And led me like a beast where, at the altar,
> My father held the sacrificial knife.
> I live it all again. My fingers, groping,
> Go out to him like this and clutch his beard
> And cling about his knees. I cry to him:
> "It is you yourself, yourself, who brought me here,
> You who deceived my maidens and my mother!
> They sing my marriage song at home, they fill
> The house with happiness, while all the time
> Here I am dying at my father's hands!
> You led me in your chariot to take
> Achilles for my lord, but here is death
> And the taste of blood, not kisses, on my lips!"

In addition to propitiating the gods to obtain a particular favorable outcome, child sacrifice in the literature of the ancient Near East was often motivated by intergenerational conflict and competition for power. We see this theme in the Cronus-Zeus clash in the *Theogony* of Hesiod, a contemporary of Homer,

16 Euripides (1981).

8th century CE.[17] In it, Cronus sequentially eats each of his children so that he or she will not usurp his heavenly power. One also sees this theme in the stories concerning the births of Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Oedipus.[18]

Oedipus, more than any other hero of Greek mythology, is well known today, mostly because of Sigmund Freud's use of this figure as the organizing metaphor for his psychoanalytic insights. In Sophocles' tragedy, "Oedipus Rex,"[19] first performed in 431 BCE, we enter the narrative in the middle. A famine is ravishing the land of Thebes, killing the children, crops and animals. The King of Thebes, Oedipus, desperately wishes to understand why the gods have sent this famine, and to take all steps necessary to make it end. Reluctantly, the blind seer Tiresias tells the King that the gods are angry with Thebes because the murder of the previous king, Laius, was never avenged. Oedipus conducts a relentless inquiry into the matter himself.

The play reads like a contemporary well-constructed murder mystery. With each clue that Oedipus obtains gradually tightening the noose of guilt around Oedipus' own neck—the audience only a few steps ahead of the characters on the stage.

What we, and Oedipus, discover is that when Laius and Jocasta, the King and Queen of Thebes, first learn that they are to be parents, they consult the oracle at Delphi. The oracle tells the young couple that the son that is in Jocasta's womb would grow up and kill his father, Laius, and have sexual relations with his own mother. When Oedipus is born, to prevent the prophesy from coming true, the couple give the infant to a servant to take him to the distant Mount Citaeron in Corinth, to pierce and shackle his ankles there. The name "Oedipus" is Greek for "Swollen feet." The servant is to leave him to starve and die in that isolated spot. Years later, during the inquiry, an ancient shepherd tells King Oedipus that he took pity on the infant and, unbeknownst to Laius and Jocasta, carried the infant to be raised by the childless King and Queen of Corinth.

There the boy grows to be a young man, ignorant of his history and of his adoption, until when sixteen years old, Oedipus overhears a conversation that changes his life course. During a drunken banquet in the palace, the prince

17 See Hesiod (1953). For a discussion of mythology centering around Zeus and his family see Cook (1925) and Arafat (1990).

18 See Heinz Kohut (1982) in which he argues that Freud overemphasized intergenerational conflict and under-emphasized intergenerational support in Freud's reading of the Greek classics and in his analysis of psychodynamics.

19 Sophocles (1994).

hears a comment that makes him suspect that he was adopted by, not born to the royal couple.

In a deluge of emotion, Oedipus travels to Delphi to inquire of the oracle as to the identity of his biological parents. When the prince arrives, the oracle does not answer Oedipus' question, but instead, repeats the prophesy told to his parents sixteen years before—that Oedipus will kill his father and have sexual relations with his mother. The oracle says, "You are fated to couple with your mother, you will bring a breed of children into the light no man can bear to see—you will kill your father, the one who gave you life."

Oedipus, terrified and overwhelmed by the prophesy, forgetting that he came to the oracle uncertain of who his parents were, rides impetuously away from Corinth and his adopted parents, attempting to prevent the prediction from coming true. On the road from Delphi, King Laius and his retinue approach and refuse to yield. Oedipus, in a rage, kills the entire royal party.

Later, on that same journey in which Oedipus desperately flees from Corinth and his past, Delphi and his future, and himself and his present, our hero solves the riddle of the Sphinx. As a result of this, Oedipus is rewarded with King Laius' Theban throne and wife.

Once the murder mystery is solved, Jocasta, Oedipus' mother and wife, hangs herself. Oedipus, in a torrent of self-accusation and guilt, gouges out his eyes and is exiled to Mount Citaeron in Corinth yet again. Movingly, the play ends with the just-blind Oedipus being slowly led off the stage by his young daughter Antigone.

It is interesting to note that Sigmund Freud's understanding of the hero in the Sophocles' play involved a significant creative misreading, a sort of midrash[20], somewhat distant from the original text. Unlike the hero of Freud's Oedipal complex, Sophocles' Oedipus' murder of his father and sexual contact with his mother did not reflect Oedipus' "oedipal" wishes, but rather his fate. Also, whereas Freud's Oedipus is motivated by a profound and primal longing for his mother, Sophocles' Oedipus obtained his mother as wife as part of a prize package, for solving the riddle of the Sphinx.[21]

Most significant, Freud's Oedipus is rife with competitive and murderous wishes toward his father. It is these wishes of the son, for Freud, that create in the child's mind a fear of the father and of the potential for castration, what

20 I argue in another place that clinical psychoanalysis, as Freud conceived of it, can best be understood as a modern form of midrash. See Shulman (2005).

21 For a more comprehensive comparison of Freud's and Sophocles' Oedipus, see Erich Fromm (1957).

the child imagines will be the mode of retaliation by his father. Therefore, for Freud, the oedipal wishes of the child precede the fantasy of aggressive retaliation by the father.

For Sophocles' Oedipus, the situation is just the opposite. Before Oedipus longs for his mother and wishes to kill his father, he is sentenced by his parents to a brutal death on an isolated and distant mountain. For the Greek playwright, the "Laius Complex," the father's murderous wishes toward the son in order to prevent his future usurpation of the father's power, precedes the oedipal. That is, for Sophocles, but not for Freud, infanticidal wishes precede the patricidal.[22]

The clash of generations over power and the resulting demand for infanticide is also a central theme in the legend concerning Abraham's birth. In the Torah, we do not meet Abraham until he is already seventy-five years old when he is called by God to leave his land, his kindred and his father's house.[23] For information concerning Abraham's birth, we need to turn to the midrashic literature.[24]

Nimrod, the mightiest king of his day, an astrologer, the grandson of Noah, saw in the stars that there was a man to be born who would rise up against him and overturn his gods. He consulted his advisers. The court unanimously agreed that a large building should be constructed in which all pregnant women in the realm will reside throughout their confinements. If the child is a boy, he will be killed by the midwife. If the child is a girl, then all manner of gifts and honors will be given to the mother. Then, mother and daughter will be released from the building. The building was constructed, the proclamations were issued and the officers were designated to execute Nimrod's wishes. More than seventy thousand infant boys were killed during these evil days.

It was about this time that Terah married the mother of Abraham. When she learned of her pregnancy, she hid this from her husband and all others. When her day had come to give birth, Abraham's mother was terrified. She walked for a long distance, alone, into the wilderness and gave birth to her son in a remote cave. Abraham's mother, knowing that her son was the one Nimrod feared, abandoned the infant in the cave. Before leaving him, she

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22 For an excellent critical discussion of the "Laius Complex" and some of its theoretical and clinical implications, see Bergmann (1992).

23 Genesis 12: 1.

24 For variations of this legend concerning the birth of Abraham and the origins of his faith in a "prime mover" God, see Ginzberg (1998).

said, "Alas that I bore you when Nimrod is king.... Better that you perish here in this cave than I see you dead at my breast."

God then took pity on the infant Abraham, weeping in the cave, and sent His angels to nurse the child. Miraculously, it was on the tenth day that Abraham walked out of the cave as the sun was just setting. Abraham, awed by the beauty of the stars, worshipped them. Then, in the morning, the stars were gone from the sky. Abraham, disheartened, realized that they were no gods. Later that day, the sun rose full in the sky. Abraham, dazzled by its light, worshipped the sun. And then, alas, it set, leaving Abraham yet again sad and godless. That very evening, Abraham marveled at the moon's glow, until a cloud obscured his newest god, deserting him again without the Divine.

Abraham then cried out in joy and understanding, "The stars and the sun and the moon are no gods, but there is One who sets them all in motion. It is He, and only He, who I will worship."

The motif we see in the Abraham story, massive infanticide commanded by a father-surrogate whose power is challenged by the birth of a religious hero, is also seen in the well-known Hebrew Bible story of the birth of Moses and the Christian Bible story of the birth of Jesus. Both of these paramount figures were born, like Abraham, during evil days. Moses' birth is preceded by the command by Pharaoh that all Hebrew boys be killed. Moses is only saved because of the intervention of a righteous Gentile, the unnamed daughter of Pharaoh. Aware of what she is doing, Pharaoh's daughter bravely defies her father's orders and has the infant Hebrew Moses, floating in his ark down the Nile, retrieved and redeemed. "And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children. Then said Miriam, Moses' sister, to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call for you a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you? And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go."[25]

It is thirteen hundred years after the birth of Moses, forty-two generations following the birth of Abraham that Herod, King of Israel, is informed by the three wise men from the East that they are seeking the infant who is the "King of the Jews."[26] Herod, distraught by this infant "King," summons the priests and scribes of Israel to discern what Scripture reveals as to the location of the

25 Exodus 2: 5-8.

26 Matthew 2: 2.

birth of the Messiah. Herod is informed that the place will be Bethlehem. The King, deceiving the wise men about his motives—lying to them that he would also like to worship the infant—asks them to return to Jerusalem on their way back to the East and inform Herod where they find this child. The wise men, after finding Jesus in the manger, having been warned by God in a dream not to return by Jerusalem, travel back to their home avoiding Herod.

Then, Joseph also has a dream. In this one, an angel tells Joseph to take his wife, Mary, and the infant Jesus and flee to Egypt until Herod is dead. There, the infant Messiah is safe, but not the children of Bethlehem and its environs.

Herod orders the "murder of the innocents." The Book of Matthew states, "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked by the wise men, was enraged, and sent forth, and killed all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then, that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are all dead."[27]

The biblical text of the *Akedah* is set within a long-standing, tenacious and voluminous classical literature and history of child sacrifice. From Canaan's Molokh to Hadrian's Rome; from Cronus to Agamemnon to Laius to Nimrod to Pharaoh to Herod; both pagans and Israelites even in the days of the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel; motivated by religious fervor or a wish to propitiate irascible and unpredictable gods or to perpetuate one's own power; the sacrifice of the child persists as a ubiquitous and stubborn classical theme and practice in the ancient Near East. It is within this literary and historical context that our biblical *Akedah* text was first written, redacted and chanted.

Isaac, before the *Akedah*, is the consummate precious child. Abraham is one hundred and Sarah ninety years old when Isaac is born. Only after years of trying to have children and suffering with their childlessness, only after Abraham confronting God about Sarah's infertility and how it calls into question all that God has promised him and his seed, the couple learn from messengers of God that their prayers are finally answered. Astonished by this news, the couple laughs (*tsa<u>h</u>ak* in Hebrew) and thus, Isaac (*Yits<u>h</u>ak*) is born.

27 Matthew 2: 16-18.

But Isaac before the *Akedah* is not only a precious child to this tiny and aged nuclear family, Isaac is *the* precious child to monotheism. It is important to keep in mind that Isaac is not Abraham's only or even oldest son. When Sarah failed to conceive, she offered Abraham her handmaiden Hagar, an Egyptian, so that Sarah could have a child with Abraham by means of this substitution. This was a custom widely practiced in the ancient Near east. The Torah states, "Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an Egyptian maid, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said to Abram, "Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing; I pray you, go in to my maid; it may be that I shall obtain children by her."[28] It was from this Abraham-Hagar union that the first son, Ishmael, was born.

Yet, like other genesis narratives, for example, Jacob vs. Esau, Joseph vs. his ten older brothers, the covenant that God makes with Abraham and with the Jewish people is not through Abraham's oldest son Ishmael, it is with the younger, the genetic son of Abraham and Sarah—the one born not in the natural course of events, but rather, by a special divine act.[29] According to the Bible, God's covenant is through precious Isaac. This is made explicit in the Torah text. "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear you a son indeed; and you shall call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac."[30]

In the biblical chapter immediately preceding the *Akedah* text, the position of one son over the other is secured when Abraham, pressured by Sarah and supported by God, banishes Hagar and Ishmael into the wilderness. "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer Sheva."[31]

Therefore, when Abraham, knife in hand, is standing over his bound son Isaac on Mount Moriah, the ancient patriarch is not only about to kill the

28 Genesis 16: 1-2.

29 It is a consistent pattern to favor the younger sons in Genesis—Abel (4: 4-5), Isaac (21: 1-2), Jacob (25: 21) and Joseph (30: 22-24). This literary motif that the chosen one in a given generation is not born by natural circumstances, but requires direct and miraculous intervention on the part of God—is one of the roots for the similar, but more concrete version of this narrative one finds in Christian theology.

30 Genesis 17: 19-21.

31 Genesis 21: 14.

long-awaited beloved child of his and his wife's old age, but also, Abraham is about to slaughter his future. All of Abraham's hopes for the world, the aspirations that he worked toward since being called, all of God's promises to him, lie on the altar bound. At that moment, it is monotheism itself that hangs by the thinnest thread.

The personality of Abraham before the *Akedah* is well developed and consistent in the Torah text. Abraham, a prince of faith who leaves all he knows behind when God commands him to do so, is also a figure who negotiates. He negotiates with family in Genesis Chapter 13, with allies in 14, with neighboring princes in 20, and even with God in 18.

When God tells Abraham that He will be destroying the people of the sinful towns of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham argues:

> Abraham came forward and said, "Will You sweep away the innocent along with the guilty? What if there should be fifty innocent within the city; will You then wipe out the place and not forgive it for the sake of the innocent fifty who are in it? Far be it from You to do such a thing, to bring death upon the innocent as well as the guilty, so that innocent and guilty fare alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?" And the Lord answered, "If I find within the city of Sodom fifty innocent ones, I will forgive the whole place for their sake." Abraham spoke up, saying, "Here I venture to speak to my Lord, I who am but dust and ashes: What if the fifty innocent should lack five? Will You destroy the whole city for want of the five?" And the Lord answered, "I will not destroy if I find forty-five there." But Abraham spoke to Him again, and said, "What if forty should be found there?" And the Lord answered, "I will not do it, for the sake of the forty." And Abraham said, "Let not my Lord be angry if I go on: What if thirty should be found there?" And the Lord answered, "I will not do it if I find thirty there." And Abraham said, "I venture again to speak to my Lord: What if twenty should be found there?" And the Lord answered, "I will not destroy, for the sake of the twenty." And Abraham said, "Let not my Lord be angry if I speak but this last time: What if ten should be found there?" And the Lord answered, "I will not destroy, for the sake of the ten."[32]

What is extraordinary about this narrative, unique in Western literature, is its depiction of God, humanity and our relationship. In this text, God is not a distant despot, but rather a *constitutional* monarch.[33] In this passage, much-cited in Jewish sources, God is governed by the same rules as His creatures, obligated to live up to high ethical standards. The man demands of his God,

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32 Genesis 18: 23-32.

33 This characterization of the Jewish God as "constitutional monarch" is developed by Fromm (1966).

"Shall not the Judge of all the earth act justly?" In these verses, Abraham not only approaches God, but also, like Job much later in the same Tanakh, challenges Him, makes Him think, demands a dialogue, requires an answer, and ultimately changes His mind. It is precisely this negotiating Abraham who is so prized by Jewish tradition.

In rabbinic discussions comparing the righteousness of Noah with Abraham, it is Abraham's readiness to argue, even with his God, that is highly valued.[34]

The *Zohar*, the 13th-century Jewish mystical commentary on the Torah, states:

> When Noah came out of the ark
> he opened his eyes and saw the whole world [and all humanity]
> completely destroyed.
> He began to weep for the world [and complain to God...]
> Noah scolded, "Master of the world, You are called Compassionate!
> You should have shown compassion for Your creatures [and not
> sent a flood to destroy your glorious creation]!"
> The Blessed Holy One answered him, "Foolish shepherd!
> So now you say this, but not when I spoke to you tenderly, saying
> 'Make yourself an ark of gopher wood... As for Me, I am about to
> bring the Flood... to destroy all flesh... [Go into the ark, you and
> all your household] for you alone have I found righteous before Me
> in this generation.'"
> I [God] lingered with you and spoke to you at length
> so that you would ask for mercy for the world!
> But as soon as you [Noah] heard that you would be safe in the ark,
> the evil of the world did not touch your heart.
> You built the ark and saved only yourself and your family.
> It is only now that the world has been destroyed that you bother to
> open your mouth to utter questions and complaints.'"
> Rabbi Yohanan said "Come and see the difference between Noah and
> the righteous heroes of Israel!
> Noah did not shelter his generation

34 See especially *Zohar* I, 106a, 215b, *Zohar Chadash* 23a; and *Genesis Rabbah* XLIX: 9-10.

and did not pray for them like Abraham.
For as soon as the Blessed Holy One said to Abraham,
'The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is so great,'
immediately, Abraham came forward and asked,
'Will You sweep away the innocent along with the guilty?'
Abraham countered the Blessed Holy One with more and more words
until finally Abraham implored the Blessed Holy One to forgive the
entire generation: 'if just ten innocent people could be found...'
And Noah, the Blessed Holy One lingered with him and spoke many
words to him [over many hours].
The Blessed Holy One said to Himself, "Perhaps, *now*, Noah would ask
for mercy for his generation."
But Noah [unlike Abraham] did not care and did not ask for mercy.
He just built the ark for himself, and alas, the whole world was
destroyed as a result.[35]

And yet, the Abraham of the *Akedah* is uncharacteristically wordless, more like the Zohar's Noah than himself, when God commands him to sacrifice his own son. This Abraham, negotiator par excellence of the Torah, is suddenly, surprisingly and utterly mute. Everett Fox comments on Abraham's seeming eagerness to sacrifice Isaac. "We are told of no sleepless night, nor does he ever say a word to God. Instead, he is described with a series of [active] verbs: hurrying, saddling, taking, splitting, arising, going."[36]

It is Abraham's atypical silence and unambivalent eagerness to do the sacrifice that cries out for explanation.

What Happened on Mount Moriah

God, Abraham and the *Akedah* can be viewed through three discrete conceptual prisms. These are the traditional, the socio-historical and the psychological.

The traditional view, irrespective of its origins in Judaism, Christianity or Islam, holds that not only is the text perfect and sacred, but also, for the most part, so are the principle characters of God and Abraham. The many gaps and ambiguities in the *Akedah* narrative are filled in by developing a running commentary that interprets God and Abraham "upward," that is,

35 *Zohar* I, 215b.

36 Fox's (1995) comment on Genesis 22.

that provides the most positive "spin" on their behavior and motivations. For example, for the traditionalist, God only tests those He knows will pass. Or God, at the beginning of the story, knows how it will end. Or God really did not mean to have Abraham sacrifice his son at all, but rather He meant to have Abraham merely *prepare* his son for a sacrifice. It was Abraham who misunderstood the command.

Turning from God to Abraham: Abraham does not question God's command to kill Isaac, nor delays his embarking on the sacrificial mission because Abraham is a faithful God-fearing servant anxious to fulfill all of God's wishes. Or Abraham answers Isaac's question about the lamb with a lie, "God Himself will provide the lamb," because of compassion for his vulnerable Isaac. Or Abraham, out of concern for Isaac's safety, returns alone to Be'er Sheva, only after taking steps to guard against the retaliation of the Evil Eye.

The rabbinic understanding of Isaac as a thirty-seven-year-old man,[37] contradictory to the actual Hebrew text, also is an example of the traditionalist's tendency to interpret upward. If Isaac is an aware and cooperating mature sacrifice then the emotional and theological sting of God and Abraham conspiring to kill the young innocent is lessened.

The second view conceptualizes God and Abraham within a specific social and historical context. From this perspective, God is not timeless nor is Abraham necessarily a model to emulate. Both of these characters and the *Akedah* itself, function within a circumscribed milieu. This socio-cultural milieu is inhabited and dominated by gods who demand human blood to prove obedience, where the most righteous of the devotees readily and willingly sacrifice to their gods that which is most beloved to them, and where children are seen as property and merely a means to an end.

Within this socio-historical position, the *Akedah* represents both the old and the new. The *Akedah* narrative is firmly embedded in a pagan sacrificial worldview, while stretching culture toward a shift in paradigm. The new paradigm is characterized by a worldview where human life is considered sacred, where ethics take precedence over obedience and where God no longer demands human blood for His worship.

The psychological viewpoint constructs the *Akedah* narrative as a story about "Every Man." Whereas the traditional position assumes that Abraham represents the heroic ideal, and the socio-historical perspective assumes that Abraham represents a prototype who lived within a specific time and

37 For a critique of the rabbinic idea that Isaac was thirty-seven years old, see Abraham ibn Ezra's (1988) comment on Genesis 22.

place, the psychological perspective assumes that the struggles that Abraham grapples with in the *Akedah* are *our* struggles.

In the *Akedah*, Abraham and we are forced to confront ourselves. We are forced to confront our ambivalence about the younger generation, the helpless, innocent and the vulnerable. We are forced to confront our impulse to sacrifice our children to our own agenda. We are forced to confront our eagerness to betray our future, hope, aspirations, ideals and goals.

We, like Abraham in the *Akedah*, struggle with our paganism each day. Paganism is not just the worship of statues or the Earth goddess, that is, the reverence for the concrete over the abstract Deity. Paganism is placing things and ideologies above people, and possessions and ego above ethical values.[38] Paganism, whether it is the paganism of Abraham in the *Akedah* text or our form of paganism in the early twenty-first century, is placing the things that matter most at the mercy of the things that matter least.[39]

Firmly within this psychological perspective, W. Gunther Plaut, a rabbi and biblical commentator, writing about the *Akedah*, contends, "The story may thus be read as a paradigm for the father and son relationship. In a way, every parent seeks to dominate his child and is in danger of seeking to sacrifice him to his parental plans or hopes. In the biblical story [of the *Akedah*], God is present and can therefore stay the father's hand. In all too many repetitions of the scene, God is absent and the knife falls."[40]

It is this psychological perspective that is the conceptual backdrop within which we now explore what took place on Mount Moriah.

Abraham, rather than a knight of faith, is a hero of transformation. When he rises early in the morning, saddles his ass and takes his son, his donkey and his two lads for the three-day journey to Moriah, Abraham is listening to one type of divine voice. This voice is a much more ancient and generic God of nature. He is a God like the gods with whom he grew up and that he shares with his Semitic neighbors. At the beginning of the *Akedah*, just like Adam in

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38 See Kravitz (1997).

39 This is a paraphrase of a quotation attributed to the philosopher W.P. Montague.

40 See Plaut's (1981) comment on Genesis 22. For a poetic realization of this idea see Wilfred Owen's "The Parable of the Old Man and the Young," written by the twenty-five year old British soldier in a trench shortly before he was killed during World War I. It concludes:

But the Old Man ... slew his son,

And half the seed of Europe, one by one.

the first creation narrative (Genesis chapter 1), Abraham is listening to *Elohim*. At this point in human history, *Elohim*, like Molokh, requires what *El*[41] and his divine relatives have always required—the blood of the beloved.

Elohim has much older roots in Semitic pagan culture and history than does *YHWH*. *El* and its variations are names of God or the gods that were shared by both the Canaanites speaking Ugaritic and the Israelites speaking Hebrew. *Elohim*, the major biblical name for God, found more than two thousand times in the Tanakh, has a plural ending. It is interesting to note that, even within the Hebrew Bible itself, *Elohim* signifies both the one God of Israel and the many gods or even goddesses of Israel's neighbors.

> Thou shalt have no other gods [*elohim*] before Me.[42]
>
> And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto The Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods [*elohim*] and *Ashtarot* from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only; and He will deliver you out of the hands of the Philistines.[43]
>
> For all the gods [*elohim*] of the nations are idols; but the Lord made the heavens.[44]
>
> For Solomon went after *Ashtarot*, the goddess [*elohim*] of the Zidonians, and after *Milcom*, the abomination of the Ammonites.[45]

YHWH, the name of God used for the first time in the second creation narrative (Genesis chapter two), on the other hand, is a personal name for the God of Israel. *YHWH* is never used in the Hebrew Bible to signify gods or goddesses, and is uniformly singular.

The most graphic example of how Judaism combines the *Elohim* of the first creation narrative with the *YHWH* of the second creation narrative is found in the synagogue liturgy. Twice a day, the worshiper recites the Shema, the affirmation of God's oneness, with its blessings. As prescribed by the rabbis in the Mishnah two thousand years ago, the Shema is always preceded by two benedictions.

In the first benediction antecedent to the Shema, God's creation of the *natural* world is praised and blessed.

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41 *El* is the ancient personal name of God in the Ugaritic Canaanite language. See Maccoby (1983) p. 67.

42 The Ten Commandments, Exodus 20: 30.

43 1 Samuel 7: 3.

44 Psalms 96: 5.

45 1 Kings 11: 5.

> Blessed are You, *YHWH*, our God, King of the universe, Who forms light and creates darkness, makes peace and creates all. He Who illuminates the earth and those who dwell upon it, with compassion; and in His goodness renews daily, perpetually, the work of creation. How great are Your works, *YHWH*, You make them all with wisdom, the world is full of Your possessions… May You be blessed, *YHWH*, our God, beyond the praises of Your handiwork and beyond the bright luminaries that You have made—may they glorify You—Selah.[46]

In the second benediction recited by the worshiper immediately prior to the Shema, God's personal *relationship* with Israel is gratefully acknowledged and praised.

> With abundant love You have loved us, *YHWH*, our God; with exceedingly great pity have You pitied us. Our Father, our King, for the sake of our forefathers who trusted in You and whom You taught the decrees of life, may You be equally gracious to us and teach us. Our Father, the merciful Father, Who acts mercifully, have mercy upon us, instill in our hearts to understand and , to listen, learn, teach, safeguard, perform, and fulfill all the words of Your Torah's teaching with love… Blessed are You, *YHWH*, Who chooses His people Israel with love.[47]

And then, in a wonderful example of how the medium is the message, the Shema prayer is intoned: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord, our God, is One."[48] Examining the Hebrew, we find both *Elohim* (in the third-person possessive form, *Eloheinu*, "our *Elohim*") and *YHWH*, God of nature and God of involvement unified. Hear, O Israel, the Lord (*YHWH*, the God with Whom

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46 This text is from the *Yotser Or*, the benediction recited in the morning prayer service (Shaharit) in most synagogues. See the *ArtScroll Prayer Book*, Scherman (1984) p. 87. The same theme can be found in the similar Shema benediction, *HaMa'ariv Aravim*, recited in the evening service (Ma'ariv in Ashkenazic nomenclature, Arvit in Sephardic terminology). See the *ArtScroll Prayer Book* (Ashkenazic rite), Scherman (1984) pp. 258-259; and the *Book of Prayers*, De Sola Pool (1983) p. 131. In this and the next passage, I translated *HaShem* ("The Name" in Orthodox usage) back to *YHWH*.

47 This text is from the *Ahavah Rabbah*, the benediction recited in the Shaharit service in most synagogues. See the *ArtScroll Prayer Book* (Ashkenazic rite), Scherman (1984) pp. 89-91. (The Sephardic equivalent of this benediction uses slightly different wording plus the title, *Ahavat Olam*—"Everlasting Love"—see the *Book of Prayers*, De Sola Pool (1983) p. 54.) The same theme can be found in the similar pre-Shema benediction recited in the Ma'ariv / Arvit service, *Ahavat Olam* (whose title is used in the Sephardic rite for the Shaharit benediction as well, see the Book of Prayers, De Sola Pool (1983) p.131.

48 See the *ArtScroll Prayer Book*, Scherman (1984): pp. 90-91 (Shaharit); pp. 258-259 (Ma'ariv). Also see the *Book of Prayers*, De Sola Pool (1983) p.132 (Arvit).

you have a personal and direct relationship, the God of the second pre-Shema benediction, the God from the Garden of Eden), our God (*Elohim*, the God Who created the material world from afar, the God of the first benediction and creation account), the Lord (*YHWH* repeated) is one. And so, twice a day, when the worshiper recites the Shema—Bereshit and Eden, *Elohim* and *YHWH*, transcendent creator and caring parent, God of nature and Involvement—are declared "one and the same."

Just so, a stunning and remarkable aspect of the *Akedah* text is that it is the divine name *Elohim* Who orders Abraham to sacrifice his son, while it is the messenger-angel of a different divine name, *YHWH*, Who abruptly stops the action.

When Abraham arrives at the top of Moriah, with only his son as human witness, Abraham hears a new voice, a new God. This God is a God of personal relationship and involvement, compassion and ethics. *YHWH*, and His messengers, do not require human blood as sacrifice. On the contrary, *YHWH* and His court thoroughly detest the practice.

When the angel calls to Abraham from heaven the first time, Abraham still hears the voice of the primordial God with the old command. By the time the angel calls the second time from heaven, Abraham has changed. As the *Zohar* says,[49] Abraham has become an "other" with new ears. Abraham is now, for the first time, able to hear a brand new divine message. What Abraham hears with his new ears is that human life is sacred above all things.

What made it possible for Abraham to hear the new and different voice on Mount Moriah? How did Abraham become a monotheist that day? What was it that led to Abraham's transformation?

The answer is twofold. First, Abraham became exquisitely aware of himself. The three days of silent torment, his slow and excruciating pilgrimage to Moriah, was Abraham's transformative experience, his "self analysis." Many cultures from different epochs describe how self awareness is essential to an individual choosing a new choice. For the Delphi Oracle, it was, "Know thyself."[50] For John in the Christian Gospel, it was, "the truth shall make you free."[51] For Maimonides, it was self awareness as the basis of *t'shuvah*, true repentance.[52] For Freud, it was making the unconscious conscious.[53]

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49 *Zohar* I, 120b. See Zornberg (2002).

50 Inscription on the shrine to Apollo in Delphi.

51 John 8: 32.

52 Maimonides (1970).

53 Freud (1915).

Second, on Moriah, when Abraham bound his son on the altar, perhaps for the first time in Isaac's life, Abraham *saw* Isaac. Before this, Abraham may have viewed Isaac as an instrument of his own hopes and plans, or as a confirmation of God fulfilling a promise He had made to Abraham, or as a precious fruit of Sarah's and his aged marriage. Moriah and the altar forced Abraham to look directly into Isaac's eyes and face, and as a result, to see God.

We know that it is much more difficult to hurt the other when we see the other as a self, when we truly apprehend the other's personhood. The existential philosophers refer to this as recognizing the other as subject.[54] The cognitive psychologists, who have researched the maturational development of this capacity in children, describe this phenomenon as, "every 'you' is an 'I' to the 'you.'"[55] It is this same human capacity that Carl Rogers[56] and Heinz Kohut[57] refer to as, "empathy," the psychotherapist's most important agent of therapeutic change. For the rabbis of the Talmud and Muhammad in the Koran, it is the teaching that whoever destroys a single life destroys the world; and whoever saves a single life saves the entire world.[58]

In addition, the recognition of the other as self is the essential teaching of the single most radical statement of universal and ethical monotheism in any sacred text—that each of us, without exception or qualification, is created in God's image.[59]

So, in the *Akedah*, when Abraham is at the verge of sacrificing his son, bound and terrified on the altar, who is this Isaac to Abraham? What does this Isaac symbolize for us in this shared cultural dream?

First, Isaac represents all those who depend upon us for their very survival, dignity and contentment. Isaac represents all those who follow us, sometimes unaware, where we are leading them—for example, our children, our spouses, our parents, our colleagues, employees and employers, our friends. Isaac represents all those in our lives who are positively and negatively impacted by our choices and behavior.

Second, Isaac represents the most profound and hidden psychological level of each of us. We each carry within us a terrified and helpless Isaac, bound to our altars, from whom we distance ourselves, and often disavow.

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54 Sartre (1905).
55 See especially Omdahl (1995).
56 Rogers (1951).
57 Kohut (1976).
58 BT *Sanhedrin* 37a and *Koran* Sura 5: 32.
59 Genesis 1: 27.

Last, Isaac, for us as well as for Abraham, represents our dreams, our aspirations, our meaning, our life's purpose. For Abraham, standing over his son in that barren and isolated mountain, knife in hand, Isaac was his and God's single link to the future. It was this bound and about-to-be-slaughtered Isaac who was Abraham's and God's only hope for monotheism.

Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote, "Man must strive for the summit to survive on the ground."[60] And yet, too often do we, like Abraham in the *Akedah*, try to level and destroy our own mountaintops.

Abraham's struggle with himself on Mount Moriah is *our* struggle. We need to grapple with our own paganism that sees ourselves—and others—as a means to an end. We, like Abraham on Moriah, need to become true monotheists who have a profound reverence for human life—our own and others'.

What these sparse, troubling, complex and multi-layered nineteen verses of the Torah teach us is that human transformation *is* possible, though only when we find the God within each of us Who forcefully restrains our arm when we—like Abraham—are all too ready to slaughter our Isaacs.

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Reading the Liturgy through the Spectacles of Theology: The Case of *U-n'taneh Tokef*

by Neil Gillman

First of all, no human being knows what God really is. We don't have photographs of God. What we do have, I think, are humanly crafted metaphors. Human beings have experiences of God, they capture those experiences in human language. Each human language uses materials that are familiar to us from every day life. *Adonai ro'i lo ehsar* (God is a Shepherd). *Tsur Yisrael, kumah b'-ezrat Yisrael* (God is a military hero). *Avinu Malkeinu* (God is a parent, God is a sovereign), and there are many, many more. What I do then is look at all the liturgical texts for examples. I study *Adon Olam,* which is one of the most profound theological texts we have. You would never know it because you sing it to get at the Oneg Shabbat quickly, but it is an unusually profound text. And the image there is that God is everything, *Adon Olam,* "Lord of all there is."

And yet, God is very close (*b'-yado afkid ruhi*)—and very intimate (*v'-Hu Eili v'-Hai Go'ali*). The message is: total security, just as in Psalm 91—*Yosheiv B'-seiter Elyon*—which also bears images of God's protection. And at the other extreme we have images of God abandoning us—in Psalm 44 (*titneinu k'-tson ma'akhal*, "You let them devour us like sheep")—which is really a Holocaust Psalm. And then we get into actual liturgical texts, and one of the first that I began to study was *U-n'taneh Tokef* because what I found in it is an extraordinary example of how a metaphor of God is transformed within the context of the piyyut. In other words, God begins with one image and by the end that initial image is tossed out and a completely new image emerges.

So this is not simple like Psalm 23, *Adonai ro'i lo ehsar,* where you have pretty much one consistent metaphor and the entire Psalm is crafted on the basis of that metaphor. What you have here is a complex metaphor that evolves in the course of the piyyut. And much more interesting to me is that the evolution that the image of God undergoes in the course of the piyyut is a kind of microcosm of the transformation in our own feelings that we undergo in the course of the Yamim Nora'im experience. So two things are taking place here at the same time. There is a theological/literary dimension. The text takes the image of God and plays with it, and stretches it, and expands it, and undermines it, and supports it, and turns it on its head; and at the same time that the text does it, we do it too, internally.

Now, this assumes that *U-n'taneh Tokef* is the actual climax, the dramatic high point of the Yamim Nora'im liturgy, and this is interesting because I don't think it was intended to be that way. *U-n'taneh Tokef* is a superb example of where popular religion supercedes halakhah, rabbinic law. It's much easier to get rid of *Malkhuyot-Zikhronot-Shofarot,* as I've discovered, than it is to get rid of *U-n'taneh Tokef* or Kol Nidre, for that matter. Yet Kol Nidre and *U-n'taneh Tokef* have absolutely no halakhic standing whatsoever.

My misfortune was that although I had almost no formal Jewish education, I grew up in a very old traditional shul. It was in Quebec City, there were almost no Jews around at all, but I had a father who was a shul Jew and who took me with him to shul. For as far back as I can remember, I went to shul. He never allowed me to go to the Junior Congregation. He said, that's not the way you're going to learn to daven. If you want to learn how to daven, you're going to sit next to me. So I sat next to him and I learned how to daven. I remember being this little kid standing in a men's shul, surrounded by older people with long beards and saying to myself, who of these people is not going to be here next Rosh HaShanah? Who was here last year that is not here this year? Who is here this year and is not going to be here next year? As the Sephardim say, *Tikhleh shanah v'-kil'loteha, taḥeil shanah u-virkhoteha* (let a year end with its curses, and let another begin with blessings). *U-n'taneh Tokef* is the turning point. It's the fulcrum. You look back, you look forward. You say goodbye, you say hello. This is the essence of Rosh HaShanah. In scholarly language we call it the *liminal* moment, it's the threshold moment. Something ends, something begins.

Every Shabbos something ends, something begins. On Rosh Ḥodesh the same thing happens. Most great ritual events are turning points. I am convinced that, though this is not originally what the rabbis intended, *U-n'taneh Tokef* is the turning point of the service. It is here that we experience the internal transformation that's to take place at this season, and that turning point, that transformation, is a transformation from a sense of being judged, from a sense of doom, to a sense of being accepted and forgiven. We move from the sense that I am inadequate, I am unworthy, to the sense that in God's hands all can be forgiven, and my possibilities for a new start are endless. Now that's what happens in the *t'fillah* and you can see this specifically by just reading what happens to the image of God in the text itself, how God changes in the text. Again, this is not a text that has one straightforward paradigmatic image of God. This is a text in which the image of God is totally fluid, in which the text subverts itself.

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It begins with the image of God A, and ends with the image of God B where B turns A on its head, and that takes place within the course of the prayer. This is not only religiously and spiritually the high point, the most powerful moment, the most impressive moment of the service, but also the moment of the service where you really get the feeling in your guts of just what Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur are supposed to mean in the Jewish sensibility.

Now, the last thing I want to do is a typical JTS *Wissenschaft des Judentums* ("Science of Judaism") analysis of this liturgy. We know the legend, it was one of the many, many myths that the Seminary shattered—in my own theological education—when my professor said at the beginning that its author, Rav Amnon, never lived, and if he lived he wasn't a rabbi, and besides it's not a 12th-to-13th century piyyut but probably goes back to the late 8th century and bears unmistakable traces of the Byzantine Mass for the Dead. Do you know where you find that? In Eric Werner's *The Sacred Bridge* (1959). He has an "Excursus on the Hebrew and Byzantine Antecedents of the *Dies Irae*" (pages 252-255) which is brilliant. It'll destroy *U-n'taneh Tokef* for you completely, if you want to let it, because the piyyut shares theological and literary motifs with Christian hymnody.

But let's ignore all that. Ignore your JTS *Wissenschaft*. What I want to do with you is simply read the text as it is. Forget where it came from, let's just read the text in terms of what it is. At a certain point this text became what it is, and at a certain point it got into the Mahzor. At a certain point Jews began to recite it, and our concern should be: what is its impact today?

In terms of the piyyut's setting, we recite it immediately before K'dushat Musaf; the end of the text leads right into the K'dushah. One of the interesting issues on this text is, exactly where does *U-n'taneh Tokef* end*?* For that matter, where does *Nishmat Kol Hai* end? Does it end before *Ha-Eil*? Does it end before *HaMelekh*? Does it end before *Uv'-mak'halot*? Or does it end at the *b'rakhah*? I asked Professor Menahem Schmeltzer (my piyyut expert), "where does it end"? He said, "who knows where it ends?" My sense is that it ends with *u-sh'meinu karata bi-sh'mekha.* Then, *Asei l'ma'an sh'mekha* is already the beginning of K'dushah, that's my sense. But we'll see. So, we begin. *U-n'taneh tokef k'dushat ha-yom*—"Let us acknowledge the power of the day!"

Incidentally, I wanted to say one other thing in relation to Rav Amnon. This is one of those rare instances where I think the text fueled the legend rather than the other way around. In most instances where you have a story or a legend connected with a text, it is the legend that keeps the text alive. In

this instance, I think the text itself is so powerful that it is the text that has kept the legend alive.

So here we have the famous Midrash that God sits originally on the Throne of Justice and then gets up from the Throne of Justice when God hears the prayers of Israel. He gets up from the Throne of Justice and sits on the Throne of Compassion. So we move immediately from justice to compassion, from *tsedek* to *hesed. V'-teishev alav be'emet*—"You sit upon it firmly." However, *be-emet* is not "in truth," you don't sit in truth. *Emet Ve-emunah* gives us the clue. It means loyalty; I am committed, firm. So You, God, sit on this chair firmly committed to judge us.

And now, who is this God who is sitting on this chair? Look at the way the metaphor just sort of explodes. *Emet ki atah hu dayyan*—"You are Judge." *U-mokhi'ah*—"You are the prosecutor." *V'-yodei'a va'eid*—"You are the witness." *V'-khoteiv v'-hoteim*—"You are the court stenographer who keeps the records." *V'-sofeir u-moneh*—"You are the accountant who counts them." *V'-tizkor kol ha-nishkahot*—"You, God, are the ultimate databank." What is this unbelievable phrase, *zokheir kol ha-nishkahot*? Everywhere else in the world, people forget. Things that we do are forgotten. Before you, God, nothing is forgotten. You remember the forgotten things.

So look at the way God appears here. *Dayan*: You are judge and prosecutor; You count and You record, You are witness and court stenographer. *Sofeir u-moneh*: You are the ultimate databank; everything we've ever done, You know, it's all in the record. *V'-tiftah et seifer ha-zikhronot*: and You open the book; *u-mei'eilav yi-karei*: and the book is read. *V'-hotam yad kol adam bo*: *hotam yad* is of course, myself, my identity, that which makes me, me—the hand, the fingerprint, the signature of every one of us is in that book.

So the scene is the Heavenly court, and in this Heavenly court, I have come up for judgement. And who am I facing? I am facing the ultimate judge, prosecutor, witness, stenographer and databank where everything I've ever done is known, is all in the book. And the book is open, and the book is read. And I am there in the book. Every one of us is there in the book. Is there any wonder why,when we read this, we begin to cry every year, predictably begin to cry? This is terrifying. This is terrifying because you take the thing seriously. In other words, this thing is actually going on, up there, now, today; no symbolic metaphorical stuff, right? It's the real thing.

I think it's important that we understand it as the real thing, and I'll try to show how I do that. This is the ultimate court of judgment, and I'm up before the bar of judgment, and God is everything. God has all the roles. The

text continues. *U-v'shofar gadol yi-taka*: "a great shofar is sounded." *V'-kol d'mamah dakah yi-shama* "a still, small voice is heard." It's from the Eiliyahu HaNavi stories (I Kings 19:12), of course. Instead of "a still small voice," I translate this as "the sound of silence," *kol d'mamah.* The still sound of silence is heard, angels tremble, they're shaken. *V'-yom'ru hinei yom ha-din*—"and they say, 'it's the Day of Judgment.'" *Li-f'kod al ts'va marom ba-din*: "God comes to judge us today." *Ki lo yizku v'-einekha ba-din*: "indeed, no one is guiltless in Your eyes." *V'-khol ba'ei olam ta'avir l'-fanekha ki-v'nei maron*: "all humankind passes before You like a flock of sheep." Now, the scholarship on *ki-v'nei maron* is that it's not "as a flock of sheep" but rather as a military review where soldiers pass before the reviewing stand. That is the scholarly *Wissenschaft.*

Did the author understand it that way? I think not, because I think that the metaphor changes. The very next sentence begins, *k'-vakarat ro'eh edro*: "as a shepherd musters his flock." It's fascinating to me that the *hazzan* begins the repetition of this piyyut most frequently at *k'-vakarat.* And it's interesting that the melodies for *k'-vakarat* are very pastoral and lyric, and that is the first point in the entire *t'fillah* where there is a measure of softness. Until now, it's very, very hard. It's very powerful, it's very dramatic and it's very serious. God is judge, prosecutor, court stenographer, witness, the whole thing, right? There is no defense attorney in all of this. There is no defense attorney, and God forces all of us to pass in review. The book is read and our names are there, and it's accountability.

But do we pass before God as the commanding general, or do we pass before God as a shepherd? Those are two very different things. So, whatever *ki-v'nei maron* was originally, what the author meant by it, I think is deliberately ambiguous. He may have known that it was a military review. Or he may have used it also to mean "sheep"—and then followed it with *k'-vakarat ro'eh edro ma'avir tsono tahat shivto; kein ta'-avir v'-tispor v'-timneh v'-tifkod nefesh kol hai; v'-tahtokh kitsvah l'-khol b'riyah v'-tikhtov et g'zar dinam.* The soft, deceptively pastoral note that hazzanim generally introduce at *k'-vakarat* is totally out of place here because the meaning of the text is hard. Once a shepherd causes the flock to pass before him, he singles out those who are going to be axed, right? *kein ta'-avir v'-tispor v'-timneh v'-tifkod nefesh kol hai*: "You visit, You count, You appoint, You consider every living thing." But then: *v'-tahtokh*: "You cut;" *kitsvah*: "You make an end" to *khol b'riyah*: "every creature," and You write their judgment.

So, the *k'-vakarat* is deceptive here. It sounds nurturing, but it's not. This shepherd is not a nurturing shepherd. This metaphor is much more charac-

teristic of the entire first half of the piyyut where God is judge, prosecutor, witness, stenographer, reads the sentence, ultimate databank, it's all recorded, my signature is there, God looks at every living thing, decides who's going to live and who's going to die, makes, decides everybody's death. Now, I submit that classically, this shaped the sensibility of the Jew as he or she entered the Rosh HaShanah/Yom Kippur season. It was looked at as the time when our fates are decided upon for the year. This, I think, made it much more important than *Malkhuyot-Zikhronot-Shofarot.* I think that, as the late Chancellor Gershon Cohen said after the JTS faculty decided to take up the issue of ordaining women the first time, around 1979: "something very important happened today." I said, "what was it?" He said, "I learned that religion is more powerful than halakhah."

This, too, is a case where religion is much more powerful than halakhah. This is popular religion. This is not the academy. This is not the Yeshivah world. There is no halakhic standing to this whatsoever. It's like Kol Nidre. There is absolutely no halakhic standing to the recitation of Kol Nidre on the eve of Yom Kippur. But *U-n'taneh Tokef* had much more impact on shaping the sensibility of *Am Yisrael* than did the halakhic prayers. That was because of the sheer power of the metaphor. So you have to understand that until modernity, Jews read this and understood it as *mamash,* namely, they saw the Heavenly court gathering, and they saw themselves in that court, and they saw the final judgment, and they saw God judging and prosecuting and witnessing and recording and the databank, and the book being read. Think how many of our kids who had the pleasure/misfortune of studying in a traditional Yeshivah have come home in a state of terror on erev Rosh HaShanah and asked: "where is *my* name, am *I* in the Good Book?"—because of the vividness of the metaphor.

Admittedly, there is a difference between this text and Kol Nidre. In hospitals just before the High Holy Days a hazzan will visit patients and chant the Kol Nidre for them. And I think what moves people with Kol Nidre is not what it says, because what it says is extremely dry and legalistic, but rather the melody. In the case of *U-n'taneh Tokef,* I think it's the actual text, and the proof is that there are many melodies for *U-n'taneh Tokef,* and only one for Kol Nidre.

I'm not terribly interested in the next paragraph, *B'-Rosh HaShanah,* which just makes the image even more vivid and concrete. But it ends with *mi yei'ani u-mi yei-asheir, mi yi-shafeit u-mi yarum*: "who shall become poor and who rich, who shall be lowered and who raised?" All of this is a *peirush,* an unpacking of *v'-tikhtov et g'zar dinam*: "You inscribe their fate; these are the

possibilities." Well, he could have stopped with *v'-tikhtov et g'zar dinam* and then said *u-t'shuvah u-t'fillah u-ts'dakah*: "but repentance, prayer and charity cancel the stern decree." But he didn't! He said *v'-tikhtov et g'zar dinam.* And then he says, okay, you want me to be more specific? Here, let's go: *mi yi<u>h</u>yeh u-mi yamut*: "who shall live and who shall die," etc. So that is the climax, I think, or the conclusion, the closure to the first half of the piyyut, at which point we, the *kahal* say, "no!" The *kahal* answers with *u-t'shuvah u-t'fillah u-ts'dakah ma'avirin et ro'a ha-g'zeirah.*

Now, with this you can do an interesting addendum to your dissertation on congregational liturgical outbursts. Technically speaking, we're supposed to say *U-n'taneh Tokef* to ourselves. We stand, we say the whole thing and then the <u>h</u>azzan picks up. But what exactly am I supposed to say? Am I supposed to say to *mi yarum* or am I supposed to say to the end of the next page? I think I'm supposed to say to *mi ya-rum,* then the <u>h</u>azzan is supposed to pick up wherever he-or-she picks up, and then stops at *mi ya-rum.* And then, we say in protest, "**No—***u-t'shuvah u-t'fillah u-ts'dakah ma'avirin et ro'a ha-g'zeirah*! What does this say? Let's think it through clearly. What it says is: hey, stop, this is not the last judgment. This is in no way the last judgment, and Mr. *Payy'tan,* you've done a wonderful job in building up the drama of this thing. Shofars and angels and books are being read and still small voices are being heard, and everybody is shaking and terrified and things like that. And God is the judge, prosecutor, witness, court stenographer, etc., etc. And *g'zar dinam* is being written. But we say: nonsense. It's not *g'zar dinam.* No *g'zar dinam* is being written. It's a very tentative, wishy-washy *g'zar dinam.* Because: *u-t'shuvah u-t'fillah u-ts'dakah ma'avirin et ro'a ha-g'zeirah.*

Now, what does that mean? And of course as you know, there are two different *p'shat* readings. One is that it means cancel the evil decree; and the other is, cancel or avert the *ro'a ha-g'zeirah*, the severity of the decree. One of the differences between the Silverman and the Harlow *Ma<u>h</u>zorim* is that Silverman says avert the severe *decree*, and Harlow says avert the *severity of* the decree. I would like to suggest that it's the first. The *payy'tan* knew Hebrew just as well as we do. He could have said *et ro'a**t** ha-g'zeirah,* but he didn't. He said *et **ro**'a ha-g'zeirah.* And that's the same as *g'zeirah ra'ah,* except that it rhymes and the rhythm is better with *ts'dakah.* Besides, *l'-ha'avir* does not necessarily mean "to cancel." It means, "to avert," to avoid it. It doesn't imply "am I going to die?" Absolutely I'm going to die, but it doesn't have to be now, it can be put off.

How is that done? Amazingly, by sending me back. The *payy'tan* sends me back to the normal everyday things that I'm supposed to do as a Jew. Mainly,

I'm supposed to do *t'shuvah,* I'm supposed to daven, and I'm supposed to do *g'milut hasadim.* So, it's not apolcalyptic, and it's not Big Bang end of the world—the Last Judgment. It takes place every Rosh HaShanah/Yom Kippur, and it's not final. And how do I diffuse the drama of the whole scenario? By doing the things that I am normally expected to do as a Jew, the everyday responsibilities that every Jew has all the time: *t'shuvah; t'fillah; ts'dakah.*

I want to come back to that in a second, but why is it that *t'shuvah/t'fillah/tz'dakah* work? What is the reason for their efficacy? Because we thought of God as *dayan u-mokhi'ah*—judge and prosecutor. Angels were coming, big macho blustering God, all the angels are terrified—it's the Last Judgment. But now it turns out that You're not that kind of God at all. And suddenly the metaphor changes completely. Suddenly You are *kasheh lich'os v'-no'ah li-r'tsot.* You're a soft touch. *Ki lo tahpots b'-mot ha-meit*—You don't want this business of *tahtokh kitsvah l'-khol beriyah/ mi yihyeh u-mi ya-mut.* You don't do this at all. *Ki im b'-shuvo mi-darko v'-hayah*—You want *t'shuvah* and continued life. *V'-ad yom moto t'-hakeh lo, im ya-shuv miy-yad t'-kablo.* Not only do You like *t'shuvah,* You are a soft touch, *t'shuvah*-sort of God. Until the very end of my life, I have a sliver of open door. For my entire lifetime, until the very, very end of my life—if I do *t'shuvah—miy-yad t'-kablo*. You wait for me until the very last moment of my life and You leave a sliver of openness, a tiny crack. But I can still get in through the door, even though I am about to die. Why? Because of the second *Emet.*

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We began with: *Emet ki atah hu dayyan u-mokhi'ah.* In other words, the first part of the metaphor presents the big macho God. Judge, prosecutor, etc. begins with the **first** *emet.* And now, the *payy'tan* is telling you, I'm beginning with *emet* again, but with **this** *emet,* I'm giving you an entirely different image. And sure enough, the image is transformed before my eyes. *Emet ki atah hu yots'ram v'-atah yodei'a yitsram, ki heim basar va-dam.* You are their Creator. The *atah yodei'a yitsram* here does not mean *yeitser ha-ra* vs. *yeitser ha-tov.* It means the manner in which they were **created**: *va-yitser Adonai et ha-adam afar min ha-adamah.* That's B'Reishit 2: 7; God created "man"—*adam,* "dust from the earth"—*afar min ha-adamah.* This is the text that's being metaphorized here. *Atah hu yots'ram... atah yodei'a yitsram... basar va-dam... adam y'sodo mei-afar v'-sofo le-afar.*

This is all in answer to the question: why are You so quick to accept our *t'shuvah?* The answer is because You know how we were created. You know what we are. And I would like to suggest that the subtext of this answer is,

not only do You know who we are, You are in a sense co-responsible for what we are. You made us this way. So God, You don't have a choice. This big blustering macho God of the first part is absolutely reduced to being a patsy. Because what does the *payy'tan* do? And what do we do as a result? We remind God of the fact that: listen, if we sinned, it is because You made us this way. So You are as much responsible for our sinfulness as we are. Therefore, You've got to keep the door open for us until the very last moment And this is a complex midrash on *va-yitser Adonai et ha-adam afar min ha-adamah.* You have it all in the piyyut: *ki hu yodei'a yitsram*; and then, *adam y'sodo mei-afur v'-sofo le-afar*. This is all a reference to the Genesis story, including *b'-nafsho yavi lahmo.*

Adam ha-rishon—the first human—was punished. One of the punishments was that humans had to sweat: *b'-zei'at apekha tokhal lehem*—"by the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread." *B'-nafsho* here does not mean "with his soul," but "with his life." We work, we expend our life force working for bread, and then—look at the futility. *Mashul k'-heres hanishbar*—"like a broken potsherd," *k'-hatsir yaveish*—"like withered grass," *k'-tsits noveil*—"like a faded flower," *k'-tseil oveir*—"like a fleeting shadow," *k'- anan kalah*—"like a passing cloud,"—*k'-ru'ah noshavet*—"like a blowing wind," *ukh'-'avak porei'ah*—"like floating dust," *v'kha-halom ya'uf*—"like a vanished dream." These are all images of vulnerability, of fragility. This says: look how You made us, God. And all of this is prefaced by *emet.* And all of **this** *emet* is prefaced by a completely different version of the metaphor for God. And the turning point of the piyyut is *t'shuvah / t'fillah / ts'dakah*, which we shout out in protest to the first two paragraphs. And by doing so we say to the *payy'tan*: "**no**," in a kind of antiphonal response. To the entire first two paragraphs up to *u-mi yarum* we shout out: "no, no, no, stop, no it's not true! It's not true: *t'shuvah u-t'fillah u-ts'dakah ma'avirin et ro'a ha-g'zeirah.*

It's not final, and it's not apocalyptic. It's not terrible and terrifying; it's every day, and there are ways out. And why are there ways out? Because of the second *emet*, because this God is not that kind of God. This God is a soft-touch guy. He waits for us. And there's more. Suddenly there appears the missing metaphor from the entire court scene. Who was not present in that court scene? What was the piece of the "court" metaphor that was missing? The **defense attorney!** We now have a defense attorney. **God** has now become the defense attorney as well. So since You made us in this totally fragile kind of way, You have to accept our *t'shuvah,* because *ad yom moto t'-khakeh lo.* We are totally vulnerable, *v'-atah hu melekh eil hai v'-kayam*—"You are everlasting." Therefore, we are in Your hands.

The reason I'm convinced that *Ein kitsvah li-sh'notekha* is still part of the piyyut is because of *v'-tahtokh kitsvah l'-khol b' riyah* earlier on. One of the things You do is to decree a boundary, an end, a *keits* for everybody that lives, whereas You have no *keits. Ein kitzvah li-sh'notekha*—"no end of years." *V'-ein keits l'-orekh yamekha*—"no end of days." *V'-ein l'-sha'eir mark'vot k'vodekha*—"inconceivable Your glory." *V'-ein l'-fareish ilum sh'mekha*—"and no explaining Your mystery." *Shimkha na'eh l'-kha v'-atah na'eh li-sh'mekha*—"Your name befits You." *U-sh'meinu karata bi-sh'mekha*—"and our name is linked to Yours." That is the final blockbuster of the prayer. Look God, it's not as if You are God and we—Your people—are separate. We're not; we're linked, Your fate is linked to ours. How You treat Israel will determine how You are treated in the world. Our name is forever linked with Your name: *u-sh'meinu karata bi-sh'mekha*—"our name and Your name are one. Our destinies are linked, and therefore, the final appeal of *U-n'taneh Tokef* is to the *brit*—the Covenant—the relationship with God.

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So now, let's go back. Why do we read this? Largely because of what happens to the very complex system of metaphors for God. And here's my heresy: the metaphors are **humanly** crafted. Our people way, way back understood this day as *Yom HaDin,* yet Rosh HaShanah is nothing in *Tanakh.* Instead, the Yom Kippur mood moves backwards, and Rosh HaShanah becomes part of the Yamim Nora'im. The mood goes back even to Rosh Hodesh Elul, when we begin to blow the shofar. And we begin reciting *s'lihot* a week before, so there's a lot of buildup to the judgment metaphor: Rosh HaShanah/Yom Kippur, a season of judgment and accountability.

We have to go before God, and the prayer captures this beautifully. It is the *Yom HaDin.* It is the ultimate Day of Judgment that takes place on high. There are two scenarios here, two sets. There is the human set, the set where we live, this shul, this hazzan, this rabbi, these *balebatim* in real time and space. And there is the transcendent court up there: God; angels; shofars; open books; *hotam yad kol adam bo*; voices are heard; names are read; everybody trembles; and God sits; and we pass before God; and God metes out judgment to every human being. Where is this taking place? **Up there**. And we are **down here**. What is the impact of this prayer? The impact of this prayer is that the transcendent world of *Yom HaDin* and the real world in which you and I live **become one**. All of the Aggadah about Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur which we imagine takes place up there at this moment, enters into our world through this *piyyut* and becomes one. And that is why we cry. That is why we read this prayer with trepidation.

When my father read it with trepidation, it was because he really **believed** that this was taking place up there. My own sense is that it's not taking place up there, it's taking place down here. And either we are scooted up there, or they are scooted down here, but the two trials, the two days of judgement are fused and are taking place simultaneously. This is tremendously important—this is the key, I think, to understanding great ritual. What happens at the wedding ceremony's *Sheva B'rakhot*? The *Gan Eiden* where God performs Adam and Eve's wedding and the wedding site of this couple become one. What happens at the end of the Passover Seder? Eiliyahu HaNavi enters the room, and the Exodus from Egypt and our own re-enactment of the Exodus become one. **Two worlds fuse.**

The trouble with these two worlds fusing is that they are not really one. It's just an imaginative fusing, it's a sort of **mythic fusing**, if you will. And what happens at the end of the Seder? We open the door. And why do we open the door? I think we open the door because opening the door is like saying: yes, we are redeemed from slavery—mythically, theoretically, theologically. But in reality when we open the door, we see that the world is not redeemed and that people have not been liberated, and that even we are not liberated. It's like a return to history. That's what the breaking of the glass is at the end of a wedding. It's no *zeikher l'-hurban*, it's a return to history. It's not remembering the destruction that **was**, it symbolizes the destruction that **will be**. In other words, we send the couple out into the real world. They come out from under the huppah and they're no longer in this mythic world of *Yirmiyahu* and *kol sason v'-kol simhah*. They're in the real world, and the real world is not redeemed yet, so we break the glass, we break the spell. We scoot the transcendent world back to where it belongs and the couple comes back into history. I think this is what happens with *U-n'taneh Tokef*. And this is what *t'-shuvah/t'fillah/ts'-dakah* does, it brings us back from myth into history.

This whole understanding of the way in which mythic worlds and the real world meet and fuse and then separate comes from an extraordinarily powerful book on the anthropology of religion by the late Clifford Geertz, who taught at Princeton. The book is called *The Interpretation of Cultures*, specifically chapter 4. The title of the chapter is "Religion as a Cultural System." Note the term: religion not as a theological system; but religion as a cultural system. How is it that communities create religious traditions? What is the role of the community in shaping what a religious tradition is going to be like? What is the role of human beings? It's religion not from the perspective of God, but religion from the perspective of human beings. How did religions evolve in the history of human communities? How did all of this happen?

Geertz discusses the relationship between ritual and this transcendent world that religion creates, namely a world in which there's God and there are judges and the supreme court. What happens at great moments of ritual, he says, is that the transcendent world that religion paints and the real world of human beings fuse. They become one, which is what gives this transcendent world its "aura of factuality." My father believed that the world up there is *mamash*. On Rosh HaShanah/Yom Kippur he was terrified because what was happening was *mamash*. There is a God, and He's sitting on a big chair up there, and the books are open, and angels are trembling, the shofars are blowing, and they are reading my father's name! And the entire world, his life that he lived and the year that he had, etc., is up there. This was not fantasy for him.

For me, this is fantasy, but brilliant fantasy! And what does this piyyut do? It brings that world back down into shul, into a world where God is no longer sitting up there, God is sitting in shul. And the angels are in shul. And all of this is going on here in shul. And in the course of saying this piyyut, we undergo the transformation from fear and trembling to a sense of relief, which is exactly the transformation that I'm supposed to go through on Rosh HaShanah/Yom Kippur. I enter Rosh HaShanah with trepidation, I exit at the end of Yom Kippur with a sense of relief. How do I get from one to the other? I think the turning point in the drama of that whole ten-day period is here. And I think that *t'-shuvah/t'fillah/ts'dakah ma'avirin et ro'a ha-g'zeirah* says that the responsibility is not up there, **the responsibility is down here**. And what is expected of me? Nothing that is not familiar. Nothing that I'm not used to doing, but the normal things a Jew does: *t'-shuvah/t'fillah/ts'dakah.*

The vividness of the court scene is what I call fantasy. The fact that on this day we believe that we stand in judgment, and that God forgives us for the sins that we've committed in the past year, that is not fantasy. That, I believe, is *mamash.* That I believe. The court scene in which this takes place, I understand that to be fantasy. I must add that what I mean by describing it as a "brilliant fantasy" doesn't for a moment diminish the power of the piyyut. On Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur when I say this, I am very much moved. And I accept it as metaphorically-and-poetically true. It's poetry, and poetry can be very, very true. It's not scientifically true, and it's not literally true, but it's poetically true.

And still, even though the metaphor is ultimately broken, and for whatever reason I come to the realization that none of this is *mamash,* I am still able to go back into the prayer on Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur—and have it work for me.

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R'shuyot[1] for the *Sh'li'ah Tsibbur*—Customs and Melodies

By Akiva Zimmermann

The earliest Hebrew prayers were biblical in origin. The briefest example that we find in the Torah is one uttered by Moses on behalf of his sister Miriam: "God, please heal her" (Numbers 12:13). Rabbinic literature ascribes the practice of statutory daily morning, afternoon and evening prayer to Judaism's founding figures. Abraham is credited with initiating Shaharit, Isaac with initiating Minhah and Jacob with initiating Ma'ariv.[2] Contemporary Jews who regularly pray three times a day to their Creator are thereby connected to Israel's patriarchs.

The earliest generations followed no set liturgy, the Order of Prayer—*Seder ha-T'fillah*—having evolved over many centuries and incorporated wordings by countless biblical authors, particularly King David, to whom the Book of Psalms is traditionally attributed. The body of prayers that were eventually canonized from these sources are considered obligatory. Yet, they present every Jew with a precious opportunity to approach God and to pour out the deepest longings of his or her heart. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik referred to *t'fillat hovah* (obligatory prayer) as a scenario in which "The Lonely Man of Faith" seeks an intimate relationship with God.[3]

> To pray is to stand before God. When we do so, prayer is essentially our feeling of a relationship with our Creator, expressed through words. Prayer and prophecy are synonymous terms for human dialogue with God. Prayer communities arose when the era of prophecy ended—prayer representing the continuation of prophecy, and worshipers comprising a community of prophets. The only difference is that in the covenant of prophecy, God opens the dialogue and humans listen, while in the covenant of prayer humans speak first and God listens equally attentively.[4]

The history of *Seder ha-T'fillah* is a bit more interesting than that of prophecy since prayers were not written down in ancient times and each *sh'li'ah tsibbur* followed his own version when it came to specific texts. Even after

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1 R'shuyot (singular: R'shut) are religious poems asking "Permission," recited by the prayer leader before beginning a new section of the liturgy.

2 Babylonian Talmud, *B'rakhot*, 26b.

3 In his book of the same title, 1965.

4 From Rabbi Soloveitchik's teachings *Year by Year*, translated by Aaron Pinchik (Jerusalem: Heikhal Shlomo), 1968.

a common version had finally emerged, payy'tanim[5] continued to elaborate on the basic texts. Over time they created thousands of piyyutim that were recited in between the body of statutory prayer known as Matbei'a.[6] Many of these piyyutim were rediscovered only in recent generations, with close examination of the Ben Ezra Synagogue's Genizah—the hidden resting place for holy books—in Cairo.[7] The downfall of Communism a century later has also revealed the existence of caches of piyyutim that were hidden behind the former Iron Curtain throughout Eastern Europe.

Two-Hundred R'shuyot—Few of Them Found in the Traditional Liturgy

R'shuyot form a special category of piyyut. They appear before liturgical sections such as Shaḥarit, Musaf, Torah and Haftarah—on High Holidays, Festivals and special Sabbaths—as well as celebratory occasions like a bridegroom's Aliyah to the Torah on the Sabbath preceding the wedding. In addition, special R'shuyot were composed on behalf of the *sh'liḥei tsibbur* themselves. Most of R'shuyot today belong more in the province of research than that of public prayer.

Every community had its own minhag (custom), and rarely was a minhag shared by all communities. One exception, found in Ashkenazic as well as Sephardic siddurim, is an early-morning R'shut by Solomon Ibn Gabirol (Spain, c.1022-c.1069).[8]

Shaḥar a-vakesh'kha tsuri u-misgabi	At the dawn I seek thee, Rock and refuge tried,
E'erokh l'-fanekha shaḥri v'gam arbi	In due service speak Thee morn and eventide.
Li-f'nei g'dulat'kha e'-emod v'e-baheil	'Neath Thy greatness shrinking, stand I sore afraid,

5 From the Greek *poietes* ("poet"), cantor/poets who composed both words and music of acrostical prayers known as piyyutim (singular: piyyut), from the 6th century on.

6 (The common "coin" of blessings minted by our sages), tractate *B'rakhot* in both Talmudim—JT, 9: 2; BT, 40a.

7 In the 1890s, by Solomon Schechter, then a reader in Rabbinics at Cambridge University, later Chancellor of the newly reorganized Jewish Theological Seminary in New York.

8 Translation by Israel Zangwill, *Selected Religious Poems of Solomon Gabirol* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society), 1923: 2.

Ki einkha tir'eh kol mahsh'vot libi	All my secret thinking bare before Thee laid.
Mah zeh asher yukhal ha-leiv v'ha-lashon	Little to thy glory heart or tongue can do;
La'asot u-mah ko'ah ruhi b'-tokh kirbi	Small remains the story, add we spirit too.
Hineh l'kha ti-tav zimrat enosh, al kein	yet since man's praise ringing may seem good to Thee,
Odakh b'-od tih'yeh nishmat elo'ah bi	I will praise Thee singing while Thy breath's in me.

Ibn Gabirol's piyyut appears right after *Mah Tovu* (How goodly are your tents, O Jacob; Numbers 24: 5, said upon entering a synagogue), as a warrant to offer the day's roster of prayers. The Nobel Prize-winning Israeli author Shmuel Yosef Agnon (1888-1970) writes about the influence this poem had upon him as a child.

> When I was but an infant my father of blessed memory would bring me a new Siddur every year, from the market. In one of those siddurim I found a R'shut by Rav Shlomo ibn Gabirol, I read it, and was astonished: is it possible that a man so righteous that his name appears in a siddur cannot find God every minute of every hour—that he must look for God every morning—and when he finds Him is so frightened that he stands afraid and shrinking?… For a long time the image of this tzaddik remained before my eyes.[9]

Baal Tefillah,[10] an indispensable sourcebook for hazzanut by Abraham Baer (1834-1894), opens with this R'shut as the preamble to Weekday Shaharit, even before *Adon Olam* and *Yigdal*, the standard preliminary hymns.[11] Baer gives a "Portuguese" melody arranged for hazzan and two-part choir, whereas Gershon Ephros (1890-1978) presents a setting of *Shahar A-Vakesh'kha* for cantor, choir and organ by Isadore Freed in his *Cantorial Anthology*.[12]

Freed (1900-1960), a composer/organist, was born in Brisk, Lithuania and came to the United States as a young child. He taught Music Theory at Hebrew Union College, set numerous prayers and Psalms, wrote a book, *Harmonizing the Jewish Modes*, and composed several Sabbath services including a

9 *Kol Sippurei Sh. Y. Agnon*, "Ha-Eish V'ha-Eitsim, page 292.

10 Gotheburg, Sweden, self-published, 1877, no. 1.

11 "Eternal God" and "O Praise the Living God," texts by Solomon ibn Gabirol (12th century), and Daniel ben Judah (14th century), respectively..

12 Volume 3, *Sholosh R'golim* (New York: Bloch Publishing Co.), 1948: 94.

Hasidic one. His contemporary, Max Wohlberg (1907-1996) who chaired the Nusach (Traditional "manner" of chant) department at the Jewish Theological Seminary, also set *Shahar A-Vakesh'kha* to music, and used the title for his congregationally oriented *Weekday Morning Service*.[13]

Kabbalistic Influences

Anonymously written R'shuyot for Shaharit, Minhah and Ma'ariv appear in slightly differing versions in various siddurim.

> *Hareini ba l'-hitpalleil t'fillat Minhah k'mo she-tikein Yitzhak avinu…*
>
> I have come to offer the prayer of Minhah as established by our patriarch Isaac…

I have heard the same R'shut wording used to introduce Weekday Ma'ariv by Hazzan Avraham David Fuchs of the Ohab Zedek Synagogue in Belle Harbor, New York. Abraham Adler, formerly cantor of the Seitenstettentempel in Vienna, explained that a R'shut was said before Ma'ariv in his synagogue only on the 7th of Adar, the traditional date for the birth and death of Moses. In Vienna it was called *Yom ha-Hevra Kaddisha* ("Burial-Society Day").

R'shuyot that precede the early-morning *P'sukei D'-Zimra* piyyut, *Nishmat Kol Hai t'-Vareikh* ("The souls of all flesh praise You") form a special category over seventy strong. One of them—*Eil Ehad B'ra'ani* ("The One God Created Me")—by Abraham Ibn Ezra (Spain, 1089-Italy, 1164), is best known and has been incorporated by Ashkenazic practice into the body of *Z'mirot* (table-songs) sung informally apart from worship on Shabbat. Its connection to *Nishmat* becomes apparent in the final strophe.

> *E'ekod al appi v'-efros l'kha kappai ad eftah pi b'-Nishmat Kol Hai*
>
> I bow and stretch forth my hands before giving voice to the *Nishmat* prayer.

Ibn Ezra's R'shut was set to music by Rabbi Meir Shapira (1887-1934), founder of the seminary, Yeshivat Hakhmei Lublin, in Poland (1924). Israeli Knesset member Benjamin Mintz wrote of him in his book, *Meir b'-Ahavah* (1943). Rav Shapira's custom was to recite Abraham Ibn Ezra's poem *Libi u-V'sari Y'-Ran'nu el Eil Hai* ("My body and soul sing to the Living God") every Sabbath, silently. Only the final strophe would he sing aloud.

> *Ozlat yadeinu v'-tash koheinu, u-vat kol t'-nahameinu, od Avinu hai*
>
> Despite our helplessness, we are consoled by knowing that our Heavenly Father lives!

13 New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1974.

Benjamin Mintz relates that on the Sabbath before he died, "Rabbi Shapira remained silent when it came time to sing this final strophe."

An Ancient Chant That Goes Straight to the Heart

Mi-Sod hakhamim u-n'vonim umi-lemed da'at u-m'vinim eft'hah pi bi-t'fillah…

With words of learning from the wise… I open my lips in prayer… "

This brief anonymously written R'shut appears before the K'rovah—a multi-sectioned piyyut whose various parts appear in the opening three blessings of the Amidah repetitions on High Holidays, Pilgrimage Festivals, and Special Sabbaths preceding Purim and Passover. Its words hint at the rationale for R'shuyot in general. Before the era of printed prayer books the *sh'li'ah tsibbur* bore the responsibility of reciting piyyutim—beloved by the people—from memory. To justify this interruption of the mandatory blessings he sought to obtain prior forgiveness from the group that had delegated him to recite piyyutim—the congregation. He would suit the words of *Mi-Sod* to the liturgical occasion:

Rosh HaShanah

… l'-halot ul'-hanein p'nei Melekh Malkhei ha-m'lakhim va-Adonei ha-adonim

… to plead before the Sovereign of sovereigns and the God of all gods.

Yom Kippur

… l'-halot ul'-hanein p'nei Melekh mokheil v'-solei'ah la-avonim

… to plead before the Sovereign Who forgives iniquity.

Festivals and Special Sabbaths

… le-hodot ul'-hallel p'nei shokhein m'romim

… to thank and praise the One Who dwells on high.

Israel's second Prime Minister, Moshe Sharett (1894-1965), an inveterate coiner of new Hebrew phrases, loved to borrow the piyyut's word *lemed* ("learning") to announce a *Yom Iyyun* ("Day of Learning"). He also found novel private uses for the word. In a letter to his children he wrote: "When I arrived here I found much learning (*lemed*) among those who taught piano."[14]

This modest R'shut must have appeared inadequate to the task of setting the stage for Amidah repetitions on holy days, for payy'tanim soon added their own R'shuyot to K'rovot that they or others had composed. Thus on Shaharit of Rosh HaShanah we have Yekutiel ben Moshe (11th century, Germany) appending a R'shut onto El'azar Kallir's K'rovah—*At Hil Yom P'kudah* ("The

14 *Ha-Hinukh ha-Musikali*, vol. 9, Elul 1966.

Day of Judgement Has Come")—written three centuries earlier. Yekutiel's R'shut begins in classical style.

Yareiti bi-ftsoti si'ah l'-hash'hil…

Humbly I pour forth my supplication…

The first letters of each line spell out the author's name, Yekutiel b'-Rav Moshe, plus the blessing *Hazak ve-Emats* ("May you live and be strong"). The *sh'li'ah tsibbur* pleads

Yots'ri, ha-vineini morashah l'-hanhil—aileini v'-amtseini mei-rifyon v'-hil

My Creator, show me how to transmit my sacred heritage—Strengthen and support me in my weakness and fear…

and builds to a climax in the final strophe

Ts'dakah a-kaveh mim-kha v'-ohil—yosher horai zokhrah l-'ha'ahil

Ham libi b'-hagigi yag'hil—yista'ar b'-kirbi b'-eit at'hil

I hope and trust that in Your mercy, You will recall the merit of our ancestors

My heart is stirred as I offer my prayer, my soul is on fire as I begin.

Daniel Goldschmidt's mahzor[15] includes three more R'shuyot for the first day of Rosh HaShanah.The standard R'shut for the second day of Rosh Ha-Shanah is by Shim'on ben Yitzhak ben Abun (11th century, Germany).

Atiti l'-han'nakh b'-leiv karu'a u-murtah

With troubled and anxious heart, I have come to implore You…

Later the *sh'li'ah tsibbur* cries out:

Yagati v'-anhati eikh la-'amod l'-fanekha

ki ein ma'asim l'-zakot b'-einekha

L'-halot'kha sh'lahuni mak'halot hamonekha

"Weary, and wondering how I might stand before You—

For without good deeds I deserve not to be in Your sight;

Yet Your people have sent me to entreat You—

Prepare their hearts and heed their prayers.

On Shaharit of Yom Kippur, Minhag Ashkenaz adds to MiSod Hakhamim a R'shut composed by Meshullam ben Kalonymos (10th century, Italy).

Eimekha nasati hin b'-orkhi, b'-mal'akhut am'kha bareikh b'-vorkhi

I bear the awe of standing in Your presence, as I bow to offer Your people's prayer…

15 *Mahzor la-Yamim ha-Nora'im—l'-Fi Minhagei B'nei Ashkenaz l'-Khol Anfei-hem* (Jerusalem: Koren), 1970.

Along with the other R'shuyot mentioned above, it is chanted to an ancient melodic pattern that goes right to the heart of its hearers. So ingrained has the chant become that worshipers sing along with it in an undertone (Italian: *sotto voce*), and this despite the halakhic (legal) prohibition against joining in the hazzan's personal plea for Divine help in fulfilling the task to which the congregation has appointed him.

The custom among Middle eastern communities (*Eidot ha-Mizrah*) is for the *sh'li'ah tsibbur* to recite three R'shuyot before commencing repetition of either the Shaharit or Musaf Amidah on holy days or special Sabbaths. Recent Chief Rabbis of Israel—Ovadiah Yosef and Mordekhai Eliyahu—have ruled on the question of whether or not it is permissible to pause between the Silent and Repeated Amidah in order for the aforementioned three R'shuyot to be recited. Rav Yosef[16] writes:

> In places where they were accustomed to recite the piyyut *Adonai, sham'ati shim'akha, yareiti* ("I have heard of Your reknown, O God, and am awed"; Habakkuk 3: 2) between the Silent and Repeated Amidah of Shaharit or Musaf on the Yamim Nora'im (the "Days of Awe"), there is a precedent on which to rely, and it is forbidden to annul their custom, for their custom is based on pillars of gold (*adnei paz*), and let us leave Israelites to their well established customs, for if they be not prophets they are at least the descendants of prophets.

In his lengthy responsum Rav Yosef further observes that in Jerusalem it is customary to say these piyyutim. In fact, this writer has found a recording of the three R'shut-type piyyutim—*Adonai Sham'ati Shim'akha, Atanu l'-Halot Panekha, and Ohilah la'Eil*—sung in the nusah of Jerusalem Sephardim by Hazzan Dr. Ezra Barnea. I have also obtained a recording of these R'shuyot sung by Moroccan-born hazzanim in the nusah of their native land.

The High Holiday mahzor *Alfei Menasheh*, edited by Rav Mordekhai Eliyahu, comments on the R'shut, *Adonai Sham'ati Shim'akha*:

> Some do recite this piyyut, in order to arouse a feeling of repentance (*t'shuvah*) within the congregation. Others, more strict about such matters, do not say it because of the rule that the Amidah repetition should follow the Silent Amidah immediately with no interruption of any kind.

The chants for these R'shuyot are very old; simply from listening to them, one can easily be reduced to tears. The texts for Shaharit vary slightly from the ones for Musaf, as do the ones for Rosh HaShanah from the ones for Yom Kippur. The order in which they're recited also differs among Sephardic communities; some insert into Minhah of Yom Kippur a fourth R'shut: *Atanu l'-halot panekha ki hesed ve'emet y'-kadmu fanekha* ("We come to plead before

16 *Y'-Havveh Da'at*, vol. 5, no. 42.

You, for mercy and truth precede You"). In his liner notes to the recording of Jerusalem Sephardic R'shuyot, Mr. Barnea explains:

> So long as the possibility exists to pray in the various modes (*makamat*) on Sabbaths and Festivals in order to infuse "color" into the service, we must treat the melodic motifs of Yamim Nora'im as mandatory and not try to change them. High Holiday song in Sephardic communities excels in its authenticity and its lyrical beauty.

Hin'ni He-Ani MiMa'as—A Wealth of Customs

One of the best known R'shuyot in Ashkenazic practice is the one that precedes Musaf (the Late Morning or "Additional" service) on Yamim Nora'im,

> *Hin'ni he-'ani mi-ma'as, nir'ash v'nifḥad mi-paḥad Yosheiv t'hillot Yisrael*
>
> Here am I, poor in deeds, trembling before God Who is enthroned on the praises of Israel.[17]

The *Hin'ni* prayer first appeared in an Ashkenazic maḥzor some 400 years ago. Of unknown authorship, it is recited in most Ashkenazic congregations, though not in all. There are also slight variations in the versions given by different maḥzorim. Some have

> *... ani holeikh **v'-omeid** l'-vakeish raḥamim alai v'-al shol'ḥai...*
>
> ... as I rise to request pity for myself and for those who have sent me...

Other maḥzorim have

> *... ani holeikh **la-amod u-l'**-vakeish raḥamim alai v'-al shol'ḥai...*
>
> ... as I prepare to stand to request pity for myself and for those who have sent me...

Most maḥzorim have

> *... she-kol ha-mal'akhim she-heim **po'alei** tefillot yavi'u tefillati lifnei lisei kh'vodekha...*
>
> ... may all the divine angels who bring prayers carry mine to Your glorious throne...

And still others have variants of ***po'alei*** *tefillot*: ***ma'alei*** or ***ba'alei***; conveying the same thought, but variants nonetheless. In a few communities the *Hin'ni* prayer is also recited by the *Ba'al Shaḥarit* (*sh'li'aḥ tsibbur* for the Morning service) before *HaMelekh* (the Sovereign).

Strangely, the *Hin'ni* prayer hardly merits mention by halakhic authorities. This is perhaps explainable when we consider rabbinic disparagement of all special pleas that were recited by ḥazzanim over the centuries. Rabbi Jacob Emden (1698-1776) decreed: "Cantors who direct requests toward angels

17 Translation from *Seder Avodah*, ed. Seymour Rosenbloom (Elkins Park, PA: Congregation Adath Jeshurun), 2004: 325.

should be rebuked and prevented from doing so." The *Hin'ni* prayer specifically mentions "angels who bring prayers," yet Rabbi Emden's own *Siddur* includes it—for the hazzan—with the proviso that it be said silently and with utmost *kavvanah* [intensity], from the depths of one's heart, with many tears and with powerful fervor; let the hazzan raise his voice only when it is appropriate to bestir the people who are waiting for him to finish—let him not overly prolong his prayer.

In the section "Laws of Yamim Nora'im and Sukkot" in his book *Matei Efrayim*, Rabbi Ephraim Margolies (1760-1828) of Brody in Galitzia, Upper Austria, rules that

> It is improper for a *sh'li'ah tsibbur* to implore angels that his voice be rendered sweet and pleasant, etc. He may only plead in accepted liturgical language for such prayers—"May it be Your will—with no mention of heavenly creatures. And several prayers for that purpose have already been proscribed (no. 620).

Elsewhere he writes: "It is our custom just before the Hatsi-Kaddish of Musaf for the *sh'li'ah tsibbur* to silently recite a corrected version of the *Hin'ni* prayer. And the author of *Mateh Efrayim* stipulates: "It is forbidden to prolong this prayer because of the rule concerning *tirha de-tsibbura* (Aramaic: "burdening the congregation") and thereby causing an undue interruption between *Ashrei* (Psalm 145) and the Amidah.

In *Hin'ni* the hazzan begs that the Holy One accept his prayer

ki-t'filat zakein v'-ragil	like the prayers of an experienced leader
u-firko na'eh	whose lifetime has been well spent,
u-z'kano m'gudal	whose beard is fully grown,
v'-kolo na'im	whose voice is sweet,
u-m'urav b'-da'at im ha-b'riyot	and who is genial with other people.[18]

The phrase "whose beard is fully grown" might indicate that already at the time of this prayer's formulation there were hazzanim who did *not* grow beards. That surmise encouraged speculation that *Hin'ni* was written by a hazzan. The prayer's conclusion omits God's name in its quasi-blessing,

> *Barukh Atah, Shomei' Tefillah*
> Blessed are You, the Hearer of Prayer.

It is important to note that *Hin'ni* intrinsically demands to be offered *quietly* as the hazzan's private plea. From the rabbinic reactions we have cited it is evident that hazzanim have habitually treated it otherwise, more like they would treat the text

18 Translation from *The Complete ArtScroll Machzor*, Nosson Ascherman & Meir Zlotowitz, eds. (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications), 1985: 445.

Az b'-kol ra'ash gadol, adir v'-hazak ...
Then with a sound of great noise, mighty and powerful... [19]

Realistically, however, the congregation has waited all morning for the cantor to "deliver" *Hin'ni*, on which his overall approval rating will rest. This results in some hazzanim singing the entire prayer *fortissimo*, and others singing only part of it that way while reciting the personal confession *ki hotei u-fosheí'a ani* ("for I am indeed a sinner and transgressor") *sotto voce*.

Theatrical Effects

There have been cantors who converted *Hin'ni* into a spectacle; worshipers may not have applauded, but they accepted the theatrics with glee. One apocryphal story goes like this.

> A cantor waited at the Sanctuary entrance as the choir intoned: "Khazn, where ***are*** you?" The cantor replied: "***Hin'ni!***," as he entered the Sanctuary and strode to the Bimah (elevated central Reading platform). The choir then chanted: "And ***what*** are you?"—to which the cantor responded tearfully, "***he-'ani mi-ma'as!***"—and continued with the prayer.

The story may or may not have its roots in actual fact, but I have witnessed cantors beginning *Hin'ni* by the Holy Ark and, upon reaching the words *holeikh v'-omeid* ("rise and go"), walking slowly and deliberately to the Bimah while singing. To be sure, these choreographed moves were viewed by many (including this writer) as being more appropriate to a playhouse than to a synagogue. Among those who protested was the celebrated hazzan of Riga, Borukh Leib Rosowsky (1841-1919), who always recited *Hin'ni* in an undertone. When asked why, he said: "This is a personal prayer between me and my Creator and it is not the congregation's business to know what I have requested from the Master of the Universe." As for those hazzanim who produce thunder and lightning at the words *v'-tig'ar ba-Satan l'-val yastineini* ("denounce Satan that he not impede me"), Rosowsky explained that he conquered Satan with silence rather than with screaming.

Yitzhak Y'didyah Frankel, the late Chief Rabbi of Tel-Aviv, told me that Gershon Sirota, the Chief Cantor of Warsaw's Tlomacke Synagogue early in the 20th century, used to increase the volume of his huge voice at the words *Shaddai, ayom v'-nora* ("Frightening and Awesome One!"). It seems that on Yom Kippur even assimilated members of this aristocratic congregation used to show up (having instructed their chauffeurs to drop them off a block away). Not familiar with Hebrew, when they heard Sirota shout out the word ***Shaddai*** (meaning "God Almighty!" in Hebrew, but "sit!" in Polish)

19 From the *K'dushah* ("Sanctification") of Shaharit.

they would reflexively crouch down in their seats, thinking they had done something wrong.

Cantor Samuel Vigoda (1892-1990) once signed a contract to officiate during Yamim Nora'im with the Kehillath Jeshurun Congregation in New York. The contract contained the following clause: "The Cantor shall recite the *Hin'ni* prayer silently." It had been put in at the insistence of the rabbi, Joseph Lookstein, and Vigoda agreed to abide by it. On the first day of Rosh HaShanah no one had anticipated that the *Hin'ni* would be muted, and by the time people realized what had happened it was too late for them to protest, for they would have interrupted the cantor's majestic Hatsi-Kaddish, already begun. By the second day, long before the *Hin'ni,* worshipers' voices could be heard loudly demanding that the hazzan be allowed to sing it audibly, and the rabbi was forced to acquiesce.

Cantorial anthologies contain many settings for the passages of *Hin'ni* that are customarily sung aloud. Yet, in Leib Glantz's High Holiday collection only the first verse is set to music. Rabbi Dr. Yitzhak Alfasi informs me that in certain Hasidic circles—particularly that of Ger—the *Hin'ni* is always said quietly. Hazzan Glantz, of course, was raised in a Hasidic home; his father, grandfather and great-grandfather having served as *ba'alei t'fillah* in the *beis medresh* (study hall) of the Talner Hasidim in the Ukraine.

In 1985, together with Rabbi Dr. Abraham Joseph Malinsky I visited Cantor Joseph Lefkifer who had been hazzan in Liège, Belgium for 52 years. Lefkifer was Leib Glantz's cousin, and like him had studied with Hazzan Abraham Kalechnik (1837-1917) in Kishinev, Bessarabia. I asked Hazzan Lefkifer if he'd be good enough to sing a few prayers for us in his teacher's style, and he willingly agreed. But when I requested that he sing *Hin'n*i, Lefkifer demurred. "I'm only inspired to sing *Hin'ni* when I stand before the Ark; and the *Hin'ni* that I sing the first day of Rosh HaShanah is not like the *Hin'ni* that I sing on the second day, and neither of those is like the *Hin'ni* that I sing on Yom Kippur."

Hin'ni migrated from the synagogue to the Yiddish theater. Anshel Schorr, director of the Yiddish theater in Philadelphia, composed a song titled *Dos Yiddishe Lied* ("Song of the Jew"), set to music by Sholom Secunda.[20] It tells of the tribulations—and satisfactions—that a Jew experiences during the course of a year, at the center of which stands the *Hin'ni* prayer. There is hardly a Traditional cantor whose repertoire does not include this song. It is featured in the film, *Der Vilner Shtodt Khazn* ("The City Cantor of Vilna"), screenplay by Osip Dimov after Mark Orenstein's book *Der Vilner Balebessl*,

20 Published by Henry Lefkowitch (New York: Metro Music), 1928.

starring Moishe Oysher and based on the tragic life of Yoel Dovid Strashunsky (1816-1850). It's ironic that Oysher's marvelous rendition of *Hin'ni* today provokes giggles when his fiery declamation, *v'-sig'ar ba-Soton l'-val yastineini* ("denounce Satan that he not impede me") is answered by the choir's lusty response: ***yastineini*** ("let him impede me!").

Rabbi Efrayim Gutman, leader of the Roumanian community in Tel-Aviv, relates that a hazzan in Bucharest would habitually trumpet the phrase *ki hotei u-foshei'a ani* ("I am indeed a sinner and transgressor!")—an admission which his choir readily affirmed: ***Emes, Emes, Emes*** ("True indeed!"). How puzzling that specifically on Yamim Nora'im when people truly feel a sense of contrition, the service is turned into a circus…

Each Hazzan Leaves His Own Stamp

I've listened to fifteen recordings of the prayer *Hin'ni He'Ani Mi-Ma'as* from the mouths of Yossele Rosenblatt, Zavel Kwartin, Tzvi Aroni, David Bagley, Sholom Katz, Samuel Malavsky, Moishe Oysher, Moshe Ganchoff, Abraham Adler, Meir Hofshteter, Abraham Raanani (to a setting by Gershon Shapozhnik), Asher Heinovitz, Ben-Tziyon Miller, Pierre Pinchik and Ephraim Goldstein. All of them were pure gold—each hazzan left his personal stamp on this prayer—and it's fascinating to compare their individual manners of reciting it. For many years I heard *Hin'ni* as it was sung in synagogue by Hazzan Benjamin Unger, with fear and trembling. Until *v'al y'hi shum mikhshol bit'fillati* ("may my prayer encounter no obstacle") he would sing out loud, and from there onwards he would sing *sotto voce*. Benjamin Muller of the Shomeir HaDat Synagogue in Antwerp did likewise, as I've been privileged to observe these past few years. The *Hin'ni* that he sings was passed on to him by his teacher David Treiter, *z"l*.

The *Hin'ni* prayer served as a *hazzan*'s calling card as he began his mission. In it he publicly acknowledged the weight of delegated responsibility that he carried. I remember Professor Yaakov Frankel quoting this text when he was appointed Director of the Israel Bank, to signify the enormous burden he was assuming along with the office. Israel's eighth President, Moshe Katsav, read from the same prayer during his swearing-in ceremony.

It's noteworthy that the American Conservative and Reform movements have retained the *Hin'ni* prayer in its entirety. The Conservative *Mahzor for the High Holidays*[21] positions it *after* the Silent Amidah for Musaf, rather

21 Jules Harlow, ed. (New York: The Rabbinical Assembly), 1972: 236; 532.

than beforehand. The Reform mahzor[22] opens the Evening service for Rosh HaShanah with it.

Various other mahzorim follow *Hin'ni* with four verses from Psalms, whose first letters spell out the Hebrew Tetragrammaton (*Y-H-V-H*). The hazzan's recitation of these verses before he begins his prayer on Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur is said to have originated with the commentator Rashi's grandson, Rabbeinu Tam, who lived in 12th-century France. I also learned from Rabbi Yosef Gorlitsky, the late Lubavitcher Rebbe's emissary to Tel-Aviv and spiritual leader of Ge'ulat Yisrael Synagogue, that in HaBaD practice the *Hin'ni* is recited silently, whereas the four Psalm verses that follow it are said aloud and with heart-rending fervor by the hazzan, after which he chants the Hatsi-Kaddish of Musaf.

Yet another R'shut for the *sh'li'ah tsibbur* to recite before Musaf on Yamim Nora'im—*Eil Melekh Ne'eman*—is found in some Ashkenazi mahzorim. Of unknown authorship, it revolves around the verse *she-lo yeivoshu shol'hai bi, v'-lo ani vahem* ("let those who've delegated me not be shamed by me, nor I by them"). It continues with

> May it be Your will, Awe-inspiring One, that my voice be pleasant this day, that it not falter, that it remain strong, as is written: "the sound of the shofar intensified the longer it sounded"; Amen.

Abraham Baer's *Baal T'fillah* includes a setting for this text, although most hazzanim recite the *Eil Melekh Ne'eman* silently, if at all. The only recording of it that I've come across is by Hazzan Samuel Malavsky (1894-1985), who declaims it right after *Hin'ni* with no cantorial embellishments whatsoever. Many communities in pre-War Eastern Europe used to feature *Eil Melekh Ne'eman* as a R'shut prior to the prayers *Tal* and *Geshem* on the first day of Pesah and the eighth day of Sukkot (Sh'mini Atseret). Rabbi Ephraim Gutman of the Choral Temple in Bucharest informed me that this was the habitual custom of Hazzan Ephraim Roubinsky.

Western European communities have a traditional R'shut that begins with *Atah Hor'eita* ("You have been shown"), just before *HaMelekh* of Shaharit on Yamim Nora'im, and also before the Amidah of Musaf. *Hin'ni* was apparently not said in Western Europe, which points to its later origin. In his book, *Minhagim de-Kehillah K'doshah Vermaiza l'-fi Rabi Yuzpah Shamash, z"l* ("Traditions of the Holy Congregation of Worms According to Rabbi Yuzpah Shamash, of Blessed Memory"),[23] Rabbi Binyamin Shlomo Hamburger states

22 *Gates of Repentance* (*Sha'arei T'shuvah*), ed. Chaim Stern (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis), 1978: 18.

23 Jerusalem: Mif'al Torah Hakhmei Ashkenaz, 1988.

that the R'shut *Atah Hor'eita* was not known in that Rhineland town. Perhaps these were verses printed for the *sh'li'ah tsibbur* to recite after the "Great" Aleinu (Adoration) prayer of the Musaf Amidah repetition, in mahzorim that followed the ruling of the Rokei'ah.[24]

Two more R'shuyot for the *sh'li'ah tsibbur* appear in the Musaf Amidah repetition for Yamim Nora'im. They are: *Heyei Im Pifiyot Sh'luhei Amkha* ("Inspire the Lips of Those Sent by Your People"); and *Ohilah La-Eil* ("I Plead before God"). They function as introits to piyyutim that used to be recited in the Malkhuyot ("Sovereignty"), Zikhronot ("Remembrance") and Shofarot ("Revelation") sections on Rosh HaShanah, and the Avodah (Re-enactment of the Temple's Day of Atonement Ritual) service on Yom Kippur. We should note that *Ohilah La'Eil* appears eslsewhere in the Sephardic rite: before the repetition of the Musaf Amidah, in place of the Ashkenazic rite's *Hin'ni*, and not during the Amidah repetition. Today, although the piyyutim formerly recited during Malkhuyot, Zikhronot and Shofarot no longer appear in most mahzorim and are skipped by most congregations using mahzorim in which they *do* appear, at least one of the R'shuyot, *Ohilah La-Eil,* designed to precede them is still recited. Why so? It has to do with the nusah to which *Ohilah La-Eil* is chanted, ancient and highly cherished by so many communities that a cantor would do well not to deviate in the slightest detail from the accepted melody.

Heyei Im Pifiyot

This lengthy *R'shut* is based on the Mishnaic statement,

> If he that says the *t'fillah* falls into error it is a bad omen for him; and if he was appointed by the congregation it is a bad omen for those who appointed him, because a man's agent is like unto himself.[25]

In Sephardic practice *Heyei Im Pifiyot* serves as an introit to the Avodah service on Yom Kippur. In some mahzorim it fulfills the same function before the S'lihot section on Yom Kippur eve and Shaharit of Yom Kippur day. It pleads on behalf of all *sh'lihei tsibbur*:

> Our God and God of our forebears, inspire the lips of those who have been sent by the House of Israel to offer their fervent prayer before You. Teach them what to say … and let them not err in their language nor falter in their speech. May they never utter anything

24 Rabbi Eliezer of Mayence (1160-1237); his book, *Rokei'ah,* contains most of the laws practiced in everyday life.

25 *B'rakhot* 5.5.

that is against Your will, so that the people they represent be not humiliated through them.

There are certain minor discrepancies between the Sephardic and Ashkenazic versions of *Heyei Im Pifiyot* and *Oḥilah La'Eil.* Authorship of both R'shuyot is unknown, although some attribute *Oḥilah* to the earliest Palestinian payy'tan, Yosé ben Yosé.[26]

The cantorial world is familiar with a setting for *Oḥilah La-Eil* by the Jerusalem ḥazzan, Zalman Rivlin (1886-1962) because it has been carried far and wide by his many students who now serve in pulpits everywhere. Rivlin's setting has been recorded by Cantor Aryeh Braun. The best-known setting for this text is by the composer Zavel Zilberts (1881-1949). It is quite long—taking up to twenty minutes in performance—and therefore usually done at concerts rather than during actual worship. The piece was performed—in part—during a 1957 concert at New York's Madison Square Garden marking the 60th anniversary of the *Khazonim Farband* (Jewish Ministers Cantors Association). Soloists were Abraham Dubow, Eliezer Zaslavsky, Samuel Taube, Benjamin Alpert, Asher Balaban, Felix Fogelman and Nathan Chaitovsky. They were accompanied by a choir of 250 ḥazzanim led by Oscar Julius, and an orchestra conducted by Warner Bass.

In 1999, Zilbert's *Heyei Im Pifiyot* was performed during a concert for Yuval subscribers at Heichal Hatarbut (The Mann Auditorium) in Tel-Aviv. Soloists were Benjamin Muller, Ben-Tziyon Miller, Moshe Schulhof and David Weinbach. An orchestra and chorus under the baton of Dr. Mordechai Sobol accompanied. Another setting of *Heyei Im Pifiyot*—by Meir Weisblum—was recorded by the late Ḥazzan David Bagley, who also sang it at concert appearances. I've heard Benjamin Muller perform a version of this R'shut by Shlomo Mandel. It was never notated; Muller learned it from Mandel when the latter once visited his home during the time they both served as ḥazzanim in Johannesburg.

A unique R'shut found in various maḥzorim—whose origin I have not been able to discover nor do I know of communities that still recite it—is the one before *An'im Zemirot*, the Hymn of Glory by Rabbi Judah the Pious (12th century, Germany). Maḥzorim that include it give the instruction: "When the Ark is opened for *An'im Zemirot* this is recited." The R'shut opens with the words

26 Some date him as early as the 5th century; others place him along with Yannai in the 7th century.

> *Avinu Malkeinu*, open the gates of Heaven to our prayers: gates of mercy; gates of prayer; gates of pleading; gates of acceptance; gates of favor; gates of healing…

and it closes with a request that the prayer be accepted

> by virtue of our holy patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, David and Solomon, Elijah and Elishah, and by virtue of our righteous matriarchs Sarah, Rebeccah, Rachel, Leah, Bilhah, Zilpah, Hannah and Avigayil, and by virtue of Mordekhai and Esther in the City of Shushan.

Of particular interest are the "righteous matriarchs" that include Bilhah, Zilpah, Hannah and Avigayil—as well as the conclusion—in which Mordekhai and Esther are mentioned. This wording is not found in any of the piyyutim in Israel Davidson's *Otsar ha-Piyyut veha-Shirah B'Yisrael* (*Thesaurus of Medieval Hebrew Poetry*, 1929), nor have I come across a melody for it in any of the cantorial anthologies.

Another fascinating piyyut is *Yah Eili V'-Go'ali* ("God, my Lord and Redeemer"), by an unknown author. Its provenance is from the 17th century and it is sung in the Eastern European rite for Festival days, after the Torah and Haftarah are read. It acts as a quasi-R'shut for *Ashrei* (Psalms 145).

Yah, Eili v'-Goa'ali	God, my Lord and Redeemer—
Et-yatsvah li-kratekha.	I present myself before You.
Hayah v'-yih'yeh, hayah v'-hoveh.	The Ever-living One.
Kol goi admatekha	All who dwell on earth
V'-todah v'la-olah… kol korbanekha.	Shall bring You diverse offerings…
Z'khor nil'ah	Remember the weary people
Asher nas'ah	Who have suffered so—
V'hashivah l'-admatekha.	And return them to Your Land.
Selah a-hal'leka	They will ever praise You, saying;
B'-Ashrei yosh'vei veitekha.	Blessed are they who dwell in Your House.[27]

Several Kabbalistic principals are woven into the text, such as *Dak al dak, ad ein nivdak* ("[God] is so subtle that He cannot be perceived"). *Yah Eili* is recited on Festival days when there is no Yizkor service. It has taken root in Israel as well, even in yeshivot that recite a minimal number of piyyutim. Hazzan Yossele Rosenblatt (1882-1933) set it to operatic-sounding music that I've heard Hazzan Eliyahu Greenblatt sing. Hazzan Aaron Daniel Miller recorded the piyyut to a Hasidic tune, and I can never forget Leib Glantz's treatment of *Yah Eili* in the Tif'eret Tzvi Synagogue of Tel-Aviv. As was his

27 Translation from *Service of the Synagogue—Pentecost*, ed. Ya'akov Davis & Mordekhai Adler, after Wolf Heidenheim, 1840 (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company), 1930: 114c.

custom, Glantz tailored his chant to fit the text's meaning, with special emphasis on *et-yatsvah li-kratekha* ("I present myself before You").

A melody for part of *Yah Eili—z'khor nil'ah* ("Remember the weary people")—appears in Abraham Baer's *Baal Tefillah*.[28] This melody was arranged for cantor and choir by Shlomo Ravitz for the opening strophe of *Yah Eili* in his anthology, *Kol Yisrael*.[29] Leib Glantz's *Yah Eili* melody was notated for the *Jubilee Cantorial Volume* published by Yeshiva University.[30]

A Hint of Yamim Nora'im in the Prayers *Tal* **and** *Geshem*

The Musaf service for Sh'mini Atseret features the Prayer for Rain (*T'fillat Geshem*) and the Musaf service for the first day of Pesah features the Prayer for Dew (*T'fillat Tal*). Over both of these elaborate piyyutim there hovers an atmosphere strikingly reminiscent of the High Holidays. The hazzan dons a white *kitl* (shroud-like robe), and certain key motifs of the Hatsi-Kaddish before Musaf are identical to motifs heard in the Hatsi-Kaddish before the S'lihot and Musaf services of Yamim Nora'im. In several Western European communities the Hatsi-Kaddish is identical on all the above occasions. In his posthumously published collection *Der Frankfurter Kantor*,[31] Lithuanian-born Fabian Ogutsch (1845-1922), who served as hazzan in Frankfurt's leading Orthodox synagogue and documented the South German nusah, stipulates that the underlying melody used for all of *T'fillat Tal* and *T'fillat Geshem* be the one used for High Holiday Musaf Hatsi-Kaddish. In order to underline the point, Ogutsch goes on to say that the added liturgical verses *Li-V'rakhah v'-lo Li-K'lalah* ("For blessing and not for curse…") that follow the piyyutim for *Tal* and *Geshem* should be sung to the melody of *HaYom Te'-Amtseinu* ("Strengthen us Today") that follows repetition of the Musaf Amidah on Yamim Nora'im.

We've already mentioned that before reciting *Tal* and *Geshem*, several communities say the R'shut *Eil Melekh Ne'eman*, and others say *Hin'ni He'-Ani MiMa'as*. In the Ashkenazic rite, *Tal* and *Geshem* fall under the heading "*Shiv'ata*"— a seven-part piyyut-type known as K'rovah that appears in the opening blessings of the Amidah repetition for Musaf. The K'rovah for *Geshem—Af-B'ri* ("*Af-B'ri* is Designated the Prince of Rain") and the K'rovah for *Tal—B'-Da'ato* ("I Speak With God's Consent") were written by the same payy'tan (El'azar Kallir, 8th-century Palestine) and are sung to the same melody.

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28 1877: no. 832.

29 Tel-Aviv: The "Bilu" Synagogue and Cantorial Seminary, vol. I, 1964, p. 159.

30 2000: 195.

31 Frankfurt am Main: Vorstand der Israelitischen Gemeinde, 1930: 48.

The piyyutim for *Geshem* and *Tal* originally contained multiple parts, beginning with a "Magein" inserted before the first Amidah blessing, *Magein Avraham* ("Protector of Abraham"), continuing with a "M'hayyeh" inserted before the second Amidah blessing, *M'-Hayyei HaMeitim* ("Who Grants Eternal Life to the Departed"), several lengthy alphabetical acrostics, and concluding with a direct plea either for gentle Springtime dew on the first day of Pesah or for heavy autumnal rain on Sh'mini Atseret. Today the lengthy (and often unintelligible) acrostics are omitted, leaving only the Magein, the M'-Hayyeh and the plea for seasonal Heavenly inundation. The first of these, in each case, now serves as as the cantor's R'shut: *Af-B'ri* for *Geshem*; *B'-Da'ato* for *Tal*.

Geshem: *Af-B'ri utat sheim sar matar,*
Af-B'ri is designated the Prince of Rain
l'-ha'abiv ul'-ha'anin, l'-harik ul'-hamtar …
who gathers the clouds and makes them shower… ;

Tal: *B'-Da'ato abi'a hidot,*
With God's consent,
b'-am zu b'-zu, b'-tal l'-hahadot…
to cheer this people by praying for dew…

In addition to the rationale for offering R'shuyot given above (under the third subheading: **An Ancient Chant That Goes Straight to the Heart**, p. 63), here is a Talmudic source as well.[32]

> Rabbi Yohanan said in the name of Menahem from Galyah. "the one who passes before the Ark [to lead public prayer] does not say 'come and pray,' but rather, 'come and draw near… that God may accept our lip-offering, that God may grant our needs, wage our battles, and ease our way.' "

The Talmud's words are incorporated by El'azar Kallir in several R'shut-like acrostics that follow the Mehayyeh paragraphs of his *Geshem* and *Tal* K'rovot.

Geshem:	*Yoreini mah a-dabeir—*	Teach me, God, what to say
	P'nei teivah l'-oveir…	As I pass before Your Ark—
	Koli y'-areiv—	Sweeten my voice—
	Rinati l'-fanav l'-kareiv…	Make my song acceptable…
Tal:	*G'roni bal yun-tal*	Let my voice not be deflected
	Mi-kro l'-ram veni-tal …	From raising its cry to Heaven …
	Kol mah e-tein bisfatayim	—Let my lips utter my meager words—
	Hein ani aral s'fatayim.	Before You, I am tongue-tied.

32 Jerusalem Talmud, *B'rakhot* 1.4.

Kallir visualized the *sh'li'ah tsibbur* "carrying Israel's fight" as he rose in the midst of battle "girded with the weapons of war"—namely, his God-given voice. The French rite includes this R'shut for *Geshem*:

Ef'ar la-Eil yaḥid ha-oneh b'-eit tsarah,
K'halekha natnu li r'shut l'-vakeish t'fillah …
I approach the One God, Who answers in time of peril,
For Your people have sent me, on their behalf do I plead…

Sephardi and Mizraḥi (Middle Eastern) practice also incorporates R'shuyot in what it terms *Tikkun* (Planned Liturgy) *Li-T'fillot Tal V'-Geshem*, using the same wording for both.

L'shoni konanta, Elohai,	You've given me tongue to speak, my God,
Va-tivḥar b'-shirim she-samta b'-fi,	And You've picked the songs I sing,
Tov mi-miskhar…	All better than worldly treasures…
U-Magini atah, Elohai, al t'-aḥar.	Now, God my Protector, do not tarry.

This R'shut, by Solomon Ibn Gabirol, was recorded by Ḥazzan Jo Amar according to the nusaḥ of his native Moroccan community.

Two other R'shuyot are recited on Sh'mini Atseret (on Simḥat Torah, the following day, in the diaspora)—for the *Ḥatanim* ("Bridegrooms of") *Torah* and *B'-Reishi*, the last and first portions of the Torah. Among Ashkenazim the R'shut recited for *Ḥatan Torah* is anonymously written:

Mei-r'shut m'romam al kol b'rakhah v'-shir …

With permission of the One Who is exalted above all blessing and song…

This melody is reminiscent of a chant for the first day of Shavuot:

Akdamut milin v'-sharayut shuta, avla shakeilna Harman u-r'shuta…

Before reading the Divine Ten Commandments, let me begin by asking permission…

Among R'shuyot inserted before the early-morning prayer *Nishmat kol ḥai t'-vareikh et shimkha* ("The soul of every living being blesses Your name"), one by Menaheim ben Makhir stands out:

Nishmat m'-lamdei morashah
The soul of those who teach the Tradition.

To it was appended a final strophe borrowed from a R'shut to *Nishmat* written by Joseph ben Abitur (10th-century Spain). It is said regularly only in Polish

practice and by a few Western Ashkenazic communities, on Simhat Torah in the diaspora and on Sh'mini Atseret in Israel.

Ashkenazic custom also includes special R'shuyot to be recited when bridegroom-to-be is called to the Torah on the Sabbath preceding the wedding, about which I have written in a previous article.[33] The same rite has an additional R'shut for the Sabbath preceding Pesah: Shabbat HaGadol.

A-vo v'-hil l'-hityatsvah, b'-ma'amad lifnei teivah…

With fear I present myself, to stand before the Ark…

It is part of the Musaf K'rovah for Shabbat HaGadol, by the payy'tan Yosef Tuv-Olam.

Elohim, b'-tsa'adkha hakot patros …

"God, as You go forth to smite Pharaoh…"

This piyyut was set to music by Lithuanian-born Aron Friedmann[34] (1857-1936), who later served as Chief Cantor of Berlin. Hazzan Dr. Joseph Levine of Philadelphia once recorded Friedmann's *Avo V'-Hil* for me, and explained that it opens with a motif used by Lithuanian Jewry for chanting the third chapter of Megillat Eikha on Tishah B'Av (*Ani ha-gever ra'ah oni b'-sheivet evrato*).[35] It continues with two motifs from Kol Nidre (*ud'-isht'vana, ud'-ahareimna*),[36] and closes with a motif quoted by Abraham Baer as the cadence of a Hasidic *Rikud*-Niggun for the Shabbat Shaharit hymn, Eil Adon (*sov'vim oto*)[37] (**Example 1.**).

A much sought-after author, lecturer and journalist, Akiva Zimmermann has published over 500 articles, reviews, essays and books on the history and performance of Jewish sacred music, for numerous publishing houses, journals and periodicals, in several languages. This survey on a much-neglected aspect of the Traditional liturgy for holy days first appeared in the Israeli weekly, ***HaTsofeh****, in two parts: September 29th and October 8th of 2000, and is reprinted in translation here, with permission.*

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33 "Piyyutim l'-Shabbat Hatan," *HaTsofeh*, 10th of Av, 1999,

34 *Schir Lisch'laummau* (Berlin: Deutsh-Israelitischen Gemeindebunde), 1901, no. 223.

35 Joseph A. Levine, *Synagogue Song in America* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, Inc.), 2001: 211.

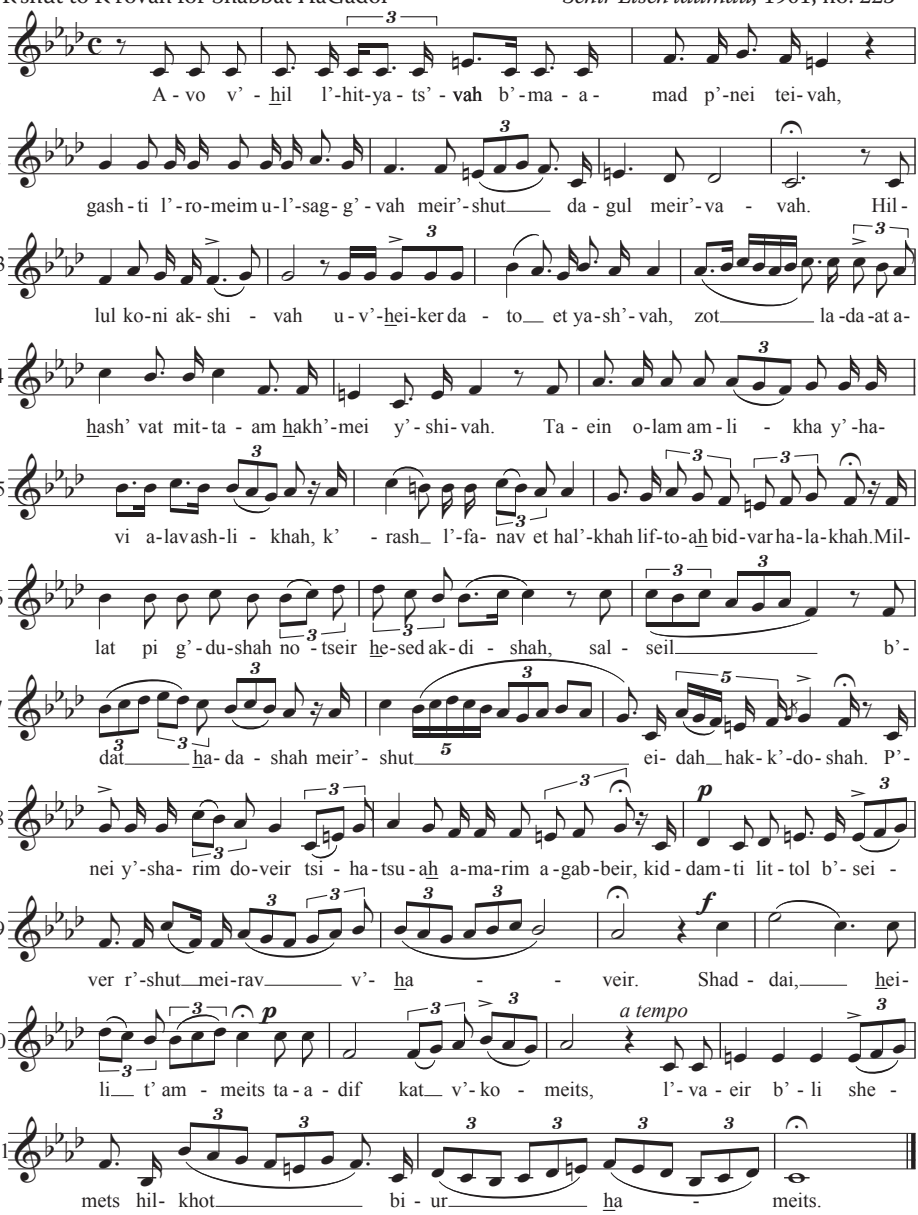
36 Joseph A. Levine, "The Three-Part Selichah Mode," *Journal of Synagogue Music*, Fall/Winter 2001: 6.

37 *Baal Tefillah*, 1877, no. 508a.

Avo V'Hil L'Hityatsvah

Yosef Tuv-Olam — Aron Friedmann

R'shut to K'rovah for Shabbat HaGadol — *Schir Lisch'laumau,* 1901, no. 223



Example 1. *Aron Friedmann's setting of* ***A-vo V'-Hil,*** *the R'shut to Yosef Tuv-Olam's Musaf K'rovah for Shabbat HaGadol—Elohim, B'-Tsa'adkha Hakot Patros.*

Lower Extensions of the Minor Scale in Ashkenazi Prayer Music, with Emphasis on High Holidays and Festivals

By Boaz Tarsi

Most discussions of music theory in Ashkenazi[1] Jewish prayer music, whether directly addressing the issue, taking it into consideration, or ignoring it, are affected by the fact that this repertoire features a unique combination of Western and non-Western musical traits.[2] A detailed exploration of the phenomenon deserves a separate discussion.[3] Nevertheless, taking this matter into account may be the key to explaining an otherwise impenetrable quandary.[4] One aspect of the problem is a perceived lack of tonal clarity in some pas-

1 The term Ashkenazi originally referred to the Jewish community, practice, and tradition that originated in the Middle Ages in the Rhine lands (I use it here in its modern, most common definition, which embraces traditions and practices from all European origins except Spain, parts of the Balkans, most of the Jewish communities in Italy), and some traditions in European communities that have kept the practices of pre-1492 Spain.

2 I wish to thank The Lucius N. Littauer Foundation for its generous support of the research for this article.

3 Following Daliah Cohen's general idea of "modal framework" as it appears in "The Meaning of the Modal Framework in the Singing of Religious Hymns by Christian Arabs in Israel," *Yuval* 2 (1971): 23-57 and *Mizrach Uma'arav Bamusica* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1986). I would suggest that although it still has not been thoroughly demonstrated, at this stage there is enough evidence to show that the tradition of Ashkenazi prayer music constitutes such a modal framework. Cohen's model reveals the aforementioned combination of Western and non-Western traits. For an initial foray into the layout of traditional Ashkenazi prayer music as a modal framework see Boaz Tarsi, "Observations on Practices of Nusach in America," *Asian Music* 33, no. 2 (2002): 176-79.

4 Among many examples, the most illuminating is the contradiction between Max Wolberg's presentation and that of Leib Glantz, which involved them in a three-sided debate with Joseph Yasser (*Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Conference-Convention of the Cantors Assembly of America and the Department of Music of the United Synagogue of America* (New York, 1954, 36-46). Other examples—in the works of Boruch Cohon, Avraham Zvi Idelsohn, Joseph Levine, and Eric Werner—are mentioned in Boaz Tarsi, "Toward a Clearer Definition of the *Magen Avot* Mode," *Musica Judaica* 16 (2001-2): 53-79 and Boaz Tarsi, "The *Adonai Malach* Mode in Ashkenazi Prayer Music: The Problem Stated and a Proposed Outlook based on Musical Characteristics," *Proceedings of the Thirteenth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (2001), http: //www.lekket.com/articles/003000093. More examples may be found in the works of Isadore Freed, Johanna Spector, Max Wohlberg, Joseph Yasser, and others.

sages in the liturgical repertoire. The following discussion attempts to find a solution as well as lay out the overall pattern within which this phenomenon can be explained. A significant aspect of the process touches upon an area, yet to be fully and accurately described, of tangential points in the study of Ashkenazi liturgical music, tonal music of the Western tradition, and the theory of church music. One of the most important aspects of this exploration is the particular definition and function of tonic and *tonus finalis* within the context of the repertoire. Therefore, this subject must be discussed before investigating the phenomenon itself.

Tonic and *Tonus Finalis*

Ashkenazi prayer music characteristically combines tonal and modal elements.[5] This is partly a consequence of the aforementioned amalgam of Eastern and Western traits, and partly an intrinsic phenomenon. This combination directly affects the definition and role of, as well as the interplay between tonic and *tonus finalis*. The melody for *Akdamut* is a good starting point for the exploration of this phenomenon as it is reflected in Ashkenazi prayer music. The similarity between the music for *Akdamut* and the music for Gregorian chant stems primarily from the psalmody-like structure of this chant. In his discussion of psalmody in Jewish music, Joseph Levine provides the following description: " ... (a melodic stencil [that] ... hinge[s] on a caesura near its center ... [and consists of] both antecedent and consequent half ... compris[ing] two equal phrases, balanced by a pausal fulcrum."[6] The text of *Akdamut* is not a psalm text and does not display a psalm's constituent parallelism or other textual characteristics. The musical chant for *Akdamut*, however, consists of the perpetual repetition of one musical phrase that perfectly fits Levine's description.[7] Although I would not necessarily argue that *Akdamut* is psalmody, the music considered apart from the text exhibits some of the markers of Gregorian chant and would be identified as psalmody (see Example 1).[8] The closest correspondences in church music are with the first half (the

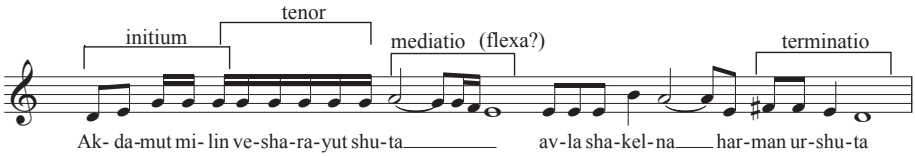
5 For a discussion of tonal and modal characteristics in some selections from the repertoire of Ashkenazi liturgical music see Boaz Tarsi, "On a Particular case of Tonal, Modal, and Motivic in Sources for Liturgical Music of East and West European Origins," in *Iggud—Selected Essays in Jewish Studies* (2007): 145-164, particularly p. 146.

6 Joseph Levine, "Psalmody," *Journal of Synagogue Music* 12, no. 2 (1982): 38.

7 Levine does not discuss *Akdamut* in his paper, but his general position is that most Jewish chant is, at its core, psalmody or derived from it.

8 I initially identified the similarity between *Akdamut* and Gregorian chant in my article, "Tonality and Motivic Interrelationships in the Performance Prac-

intonation, dominant, and mediation) of psalm tone 8 and with the psalm tone for Easter week.[9] Because of this dose resemblance to Gregorian chant, Akdamut may serve as one clear case of a *tonus finalis* in Jewish liturgical music, appearing and functioning as in Gregorian chant.



Example 1. Suggested elements of Gregorian chant in *Akdamut*

The analysis of the *Akdamut* phrase in terms of Gregorian chant serves primarily to identify a *finalis*. Within the context where it appears in the Ashkenazi prayer music repertoire, the phrase clearly shows tonal characteristics. If we examine this pattern from a tonal point of view we find that the tonic is not the same as the tonus finalis, but rather a fourth above it. Moreover, in the services of the Three Festivals this pattern appears not in abstraction or as a separate unit, but integrated into a larger section. In these cases the Akdamut tune is incorporated into repertoire sections that are primarily of free, Western character and are clearly tonal. An examination of the Akdamut tune in this context confirms my observation regarding the presence of a *finalis* and a tonic, as well as their scale-degree relationships. One example is in the *Kid-*

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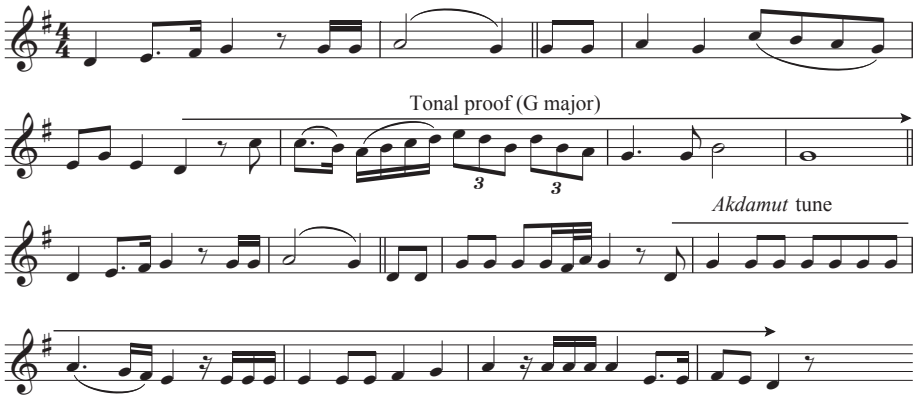
tice of Nusach," *Journal of Synagogue Music* 21, no. 1 (1991): 5-27, from which Example 1 is taken. Discussions of this connection were later pursued in JoAnn Rice, "Precedents and Antecedents of Akdamut" (MSM Thesis, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1994) and Daniel Katz, "From Mount Sinai to the Year 2000: A Study of the Interaction of Oral Tradition and Written Sources in the Transmission of an Ashkenazi Liturgical Chant *(Akdamut)," Rivista Internazionale di Musica Sacra* 20, no. 1 (1999): 175-206.

9 Dom Dominic Johner, *A New School of Gregorian Chant,* based on the fifth enlarged German edition by Hermann Erpf and Max Ferrars (New York and Cincinnati: Frederick Pustet, 1925), 73, 79. I am not suggesting that *Akdamut* is identical to psalm tones, but rather that it contains elements of this practice, which in turn make it possible to address it in Gregorian chant terms (see Example 1 and footnote 8). Furthermore, "psalmody" is yet another term whose relevance and role within the context of Ashkenazi liturgical music still needs to be explored and defined. Initial steps (the more successful ones are those pertaining to the non-Ashkenazi Jewish tradition) have been taken in works such as Reinhard Flender, *Hebrew Psalmody: A Structural lnvestigation, Yuval Monograph Series*, vol. 9 Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1992) and Levine, "Psalmody."

dush on the evening of the Three Festivals, as the following setting by Louis Lewandowski demonstrates.[10]



Example 2. Three Festivals *Kiddush* by Lewandowski

I found many similar examples in the cantorial manuscripts.[11] In Lewandowski's setting, a tonality of G major is clearly established while the *finalis* of the inserted *Akdamut* chant is D, yielding a chant pattern with both a tonic and a *finalis*, each on a different scale degree.

Let us briefly account for other cases that exemplify the same phenomenon. Among the various characteristics of the *magen avot* mode is the prevailing sense of a tonal center.[12] Nevertheless, the closing cadences in all the textual paragraphs of the liturgical section that are chanted in this mode, including the last one, do not end on the tonic but rather introduce a *finalis* on $\hat{\mathbf{5}}$.[13] A similar phenomenon can be observed in the evening service for the Three

10 Louis Lewandowski, *Kol Rinnoh U'T'fillah: em und zweistimmige Gesänge für den israelitischen Gottesdienst,* 16th ed. (Frankfurt am Main: J. Kauffmann Verlag, 1921; first edition, 1871), 51-52.

11 For example, there is an almost identical setting by Abraham Baer in *Baal T'fillah oder der practische Vorbeter* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag von J. Kauffmann, 1905; first edition: Leipzig, 1877), 201.

12 *Magen Avot* is an insider's term that refers to a stock of motifs and other musical characteristics within a minor scale whose usage is connected with specific texts, textual functions, and occasion and ritual considerations. For a discussion of the perceptions of the mode and a proposed model for its definition see Tarsi, "Toward a Clearer Definition of the *Magen Avot* Mode."

13 The exception to this rule is that in about half the settings, the first paragraph (*Vay'chulu*) ends on the tonic. A detailed discussion and a possible explanation of this phenomenon are provided in ibid. 63-64.

Festivals. When the cantillations for the High Holidays are chanted in the specific order ascribed by the text to which they are assigned in this occasion, they construct a musical section whose tonality may be perceived as minor with a *finalis* located a step below the tonic.

Another instance of tonic versus *finalis* in connection to cantillations can be observed in the reading from the book of Esther during *Purim*. Here the set of cantillations includes a number of patterns in minor and some in the relative major.[14] In most traditions the linear unfolding of these patterns results in a "piece" in which many important cadences, and sometimes the endings of phrases, are on neither the major nor the minor tonic but rather on what would be the fourth scale degree, hence another case of a *finalis* on a note other than the tonic. These cadences often also introduce the leading tone to the fourth degree, a note that belongs in neither the original minor nor its relative major. A related phenomenon occurs in the ritual chanting of the Torah in the Sabbath morning and afternoon services and on Monday and Thursday mornings.[15] The reading is normally divided into several sections (*Aliyot*). The overall tonality of the chant is in a major key; however, each *Aliyah* concludes with a short phrase in minor, and the *finalis* is a third below the tonic.[16]

We must note, however, that since the tradition of Ashkenazi prayer music is practiced within a system that is fundamentally different from that of church music, any terms and concepts borrowed from the latter (including *finalis*) need to be re-examined and applied with careful consideration and perhaps with adjusted definitions. Related considerations, such as the

14 In the case of the cantillations for *Purim*, the specific relationship between the two differs among the various traditions, but in all cases we can either define the minor's tonic as the predominating tonality and view the major patterns as borrowed from the relative major, or vice versa. Generally speaking, in any section of cantillation reading (not only the *Megilla*) it is difficult to determine the tonality and the tonal center due to the circular, modular, and mosaic structure in which cantillation patterns are put together.

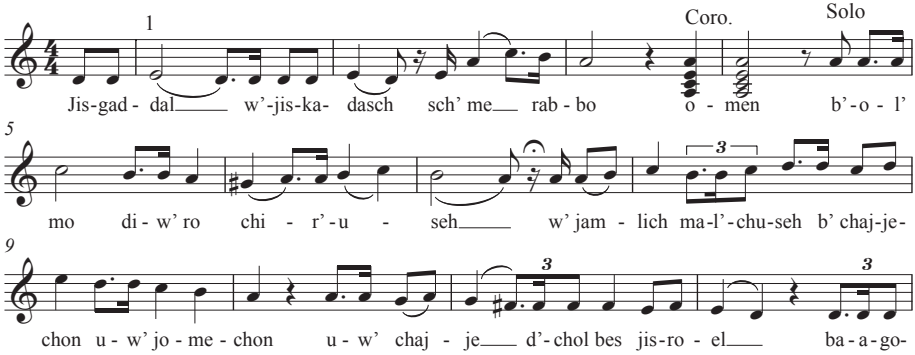
15 Eliyahu Schleifer of the Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem brought this example to my attention.

16 This may be explained as an anticipation of the blessings that immediately follow each *Aliyah*, which are chanted in minor. For more about the phenomenon of anticipation in synagogue music see Eliyahu Schleifer, "Anticipation in the Ashkenazi Synagogue Chant," *Orbis Musicae 9* (1986): 90-102. As in the case of biblical cantillations, here too it is difficult to locate the tonic of these blessings, primarily because of their pentatonic nature; thus the term *finalis* in this case is even more appropriate.

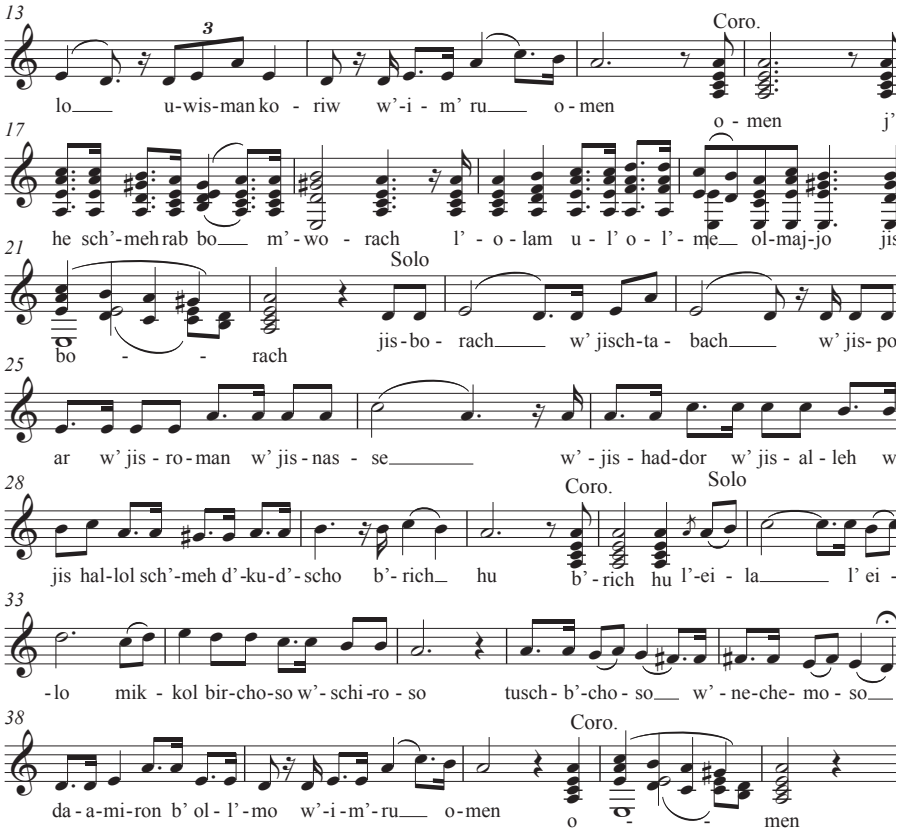
issue of plagal modes, may not be relevant at all, or may apply only in a few exceptional cases.

Tonic and *Tonus Finalis* in the Closing Service of Yom Kippur

The coexistence of tonal and modal elements in general, and a tonic and *tonus finalis* specifically, is at the root of a better understanding of the theory behind the Ashkenazi musical tradition of the *Kaddish* for *Ne'ilah*. The following setting by Joseph Heller represents most occurrences of this phenomenon in the *Ne'ilah* service.[17]



17 Joseph Heller, *Kol T'hilloh: Vierstimmige Chore und Soli sowie Recitative für den israelitischen Gottesdienst mit und ohne Begleitung der Orgel, Zweiter Teil: Vollstondiger Gottesdienst für die Neujahrstage und das Versöhnungifest* (Brünn: Carl Winiker, 1914), 296-97. Other examples of the *Kaddish* can be found in the manuscripts of Israel Alter, Abraham Baer, Moritz Deutsch, Gershon Ephros, Aron Friedmann, Elieser Gerovitsch, an unnamed source in (*Cantorial Anthology of Traditional and Israeli Synagogue Music,* ed. Meir Shimeon Geshuri [Tel Aviv: The "Bilu" Synagogue and Cantorial Seminary "Sela" Edition, 1964], 365), Leib Glantz, Max Grauman, Todros Greenberg, Joseph Heller, Michel Heymann (interview by Chana Englard, 1988, tape recording, National Sound Archive, Jerusalem), Avraham Zvi ldelsohn, Alois Kaiser and William Sparger, Adolph Katchko, N.H. Katz and L. Waldbott, Maier Kohn, Isaak Lachmann, Louis Lewandowski, Samuel Naumbourg, Joshua Ne'eman, David Nowakowsky, Fabian Ogutsch, Jacob Rapoport (manuscript page provided by Lawrence Avery), Shimon Reizen (manuscript page provided by Lawrence Avery), Loew Sanger (in Avraham Zvi Idelsohn, *Thesaurus of Hebrew Oriental Melodies,* vol. 7 [Leipzig: Friedrich Hofmeister, 1933], 180-81), Selig Scheuermann, Herman Semiatin, Elias Shnipelisky, Pinchas Spiro, Salomon Sulzer, Salomon and Hirsch Weintraub, Abba Weisgal, Joshua Weisser, Meyer Wodak, and Max Wohlberg (in his compilation of materials for the training of cantors at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America).



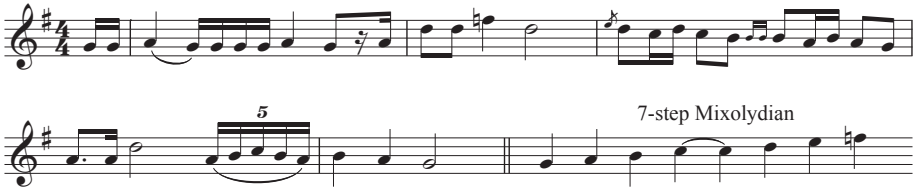
Example 3. Heller's setting for the *Ne'ilah Kaddish*

In the music for the *Ne'ilah* service, the tonic versus *tonis finalis* relationship is more complicated than in the cases mentioned so far. In a conference presentation, Leib Glantz set out, among other objectives, to establish a connection between the *Nei'lah Kaddish* and the traditional music for other liturgical occasions. He did so by way of an assumed scale structure:

> The original "Yekum Purkon" prayer of Sabbath "Musaf," as well as the other basic Sabbath tefillot, which are shaped in the "Yekum Purkan" nusach contain in themselves all of the features mentioned above. It is fascinating to observe that some of the "Mi-sinai" nuschaot, contain only one feature or one variation of this "Yekum Purkan" nusach—either the seven-step, ten-step, or thirteen-step line. As a striking example of the most elementary type of major scale, namely: the original Mixolydian

seven-step, two-tetrachord line, we can mention the famous *"Ne'ilah" Kaddish*.[18]

He then provides a short example in which all the notes from this section of the *Ne'ilah* service are explained within the Mixolydian mode.



Example 4. Sample for *Ne'ilah Kaddish* and scalar explanation as presented by Glantz

How Glantz came to this conclusion is clear. Indeed if we were to consider the first (and in Glantz's example also the last) note as the first scale degree and then arrange the note collection in his example in an ascending sequential order, the resulting configuration would be a Mixolydian scale. Of course, this result would be the outcome of a merely mechanical procedure, overlooking the basic premise that any theoretical argument must reflect the reality of the musical phenomenon it discusses. In his desire to associate the *Ne'ilah* prayer with other liturgical settings by way of the Mixolydian mode,[19] Glantz fails to recognize that a section's beginning and even ending on a certain note does not exclude the possibility of a tonic on a different note. In addition, his explanation overlooks the possibility of a conflict between identifying a tonic and assuming that all the notes in a given piece are a part of a preexisting scale structure, without taking away from the sense of tonality and tonic presence. For example, the frequent presence of F# in a piece in A minor does not necessarily indicate that the scale is not minor or that the tonic is not A.

Granted, the rendition featured in Glantz's example is more conducive to his conclusion than any examples from the canon of the Ashkenazi tradition. Barely within the boundaries of the musical model for *Ne'ilah,* the example he provides is very short and consists of only three motifs, two of which are cadences. The facts that one of the cadences is on the assumed Mixolydian

18 Leib Glantz, "The Musical Basis of Nusach Hatefillah," *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Conference-Convention of the Cantors Assembly of America and the Department of Music of the United Synagogue of America* (Kiamesha Lake, N. Y.: Cantors Assembly, 1952): 19.

19 This scalar explanation reflects an approach that is implemented in other cases in his presentation, which also present the same weaknesses as those in his discussion of *Ne'ilah*.

tonic and the other one in minor a fifth above it,[20] and that there is no additional musical material in the example, make his conclusion more likely. Most important, there are none of the clear cadences that include a leading tone in the minor key, which are so prevalent throughout the canon (see Example 3). The piece is examined out of context and overlooks any evidence from the body of traditional repertoire.[21]

Trying to fit the modes of Ashkenazi prayer music into the mold of the "Greek modes" did not begin with the work of Leib Glantz. In fact Glantz's approach is an anachronism that harkens back to the perceptions of the 19th and early-20th centuries, as reflected in the work of Moritz Deutsch, Aron Friedmann, Josef Goldstein, Isaak Lachmann, Samuel Naumbourg, Josef Singer, and Hirsch Weintraub.[22] In this respect it ignores the revolutionary effect of Avraham Zvi Idelsohn's work and that of his followers. For example, the key signature (but not the actual musical content) in Aron Friedmann's setting may suggest the same Mixolydian perception.[23] Eric Werner's discus-

20 Interestingly, this cadence features a motif typical of the *Tal-Geshem* settings, which is not typically found in *Ne'ilah.* This is despite Glantz's secondary objective, to make a distinction between the two. On the other hand, he may have deliberately included it within the example in order to show the need for his discussion in the first place in addition to this motif's present role in taking away from the strength of the minor tonic by omitting the leading tone.

21 The very existence of such an irregular setting, much more conducive to supporting his point, is questionable. Although it includes two characteristic motifs, there is no evidence of such a version in the literature. Even Glantz's own claim regarding authenticity elsewhere in his presentation (his attributing the High Holiday "Ovos" section to Bezalel Odesser, by way of Avram Kalechnik) is missing here. What adds to the questionable value of this example within the context of Glantz's thesis is that it is not uncharacteristic of him to change traditional material or manipulate it in ways that would render it suitable to his ideology and personal views regarding this tradition. For a detailed discussion of this phenomenon in the work of Leib Glantz see Boaz Tarsi, "Music Theory as an Expression of Musical and Extra-Musical Views Reflected in Leib Glantz's Liturgical Settings," *The Man Who Spoke to God*, Jerry Glantz, ed. (Tel-Aviv: Institute for Jewish Liturgical Music), 2008.

22 For a detailed review of these sources see primarily Max Wohlberg, "The History of the Musical Modes of the Ashkenazic Synagogue and Their Usage," *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Conference-Convention of the Cantors Assembly of America and the Department of Music of the United Synagogue of America* (Highmont, N.Y.: Cantors Assembly, 1954), 36-42 and to a lesser degree, Hanoch Avenary, "The Concept of Mode in European Synagogue Chant," *Yuval* 2 (1971): 11-21.

23 Aron Friedmann, *Schir Lischlaumau* (Berlin: Deutsch-Israelitischen Gemeindenbunde, 1901), 315.

sion, which indeed relies on a few measures cited from Friedmann's setting, reflects a similar misconception. He uses the music for *Ne'ilah* as an example of "certain modally contrived passages. Of these, the Mixolydian scale is most frequent (a major scale without a leading tone), and a few Hypodorian patterns occur also, giving a simple melody a somewhat exotic flavor, as in the *Kaddish of Ne'ilah.*"[24]

The key signature in Friedmann's manuscript could be an artifact of a different version of the *Ne'ilah* that is in fact in major (based on a fourth above the beginning note, hence the "false Mixolydian effect").[25] It may also reflect a transitional perception in which the key is no longer major (nor Mixolydian) but the key signature has remained.[26]

All of this notwithstanding, Glantz's description does constitute an opportunity for further elucidation of theory connected to Ashkenazi prayer music. It clearly illustrates that the traditional music for the *Ne'ilah* prayer, as well as other portions of this repertoire, can be molded neither into traditional tonal theory nor into any pre-existing modal system. Although we may use some elements from the theory of other musics, their specific definitions do not apply to much of this repertoire, and imposing them can lead to misconceptions and a lack of clarity.

The simplest explanation for Heller's setting in Example 3, without accounting for all of its constituent motifs, sub-phrases, and notes, is that the overall

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24 Eric Werner, *A Voice Still Heard: the Sacred Songs of the Ashkenazic Jews* (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976), 30.

25 As featured in Deutsch, Heymann, ldelsohn (*Thesaurus*, vol. 7), Kaiser and Sparger, Kohn, Lewandowski, Naumbourg, Ogutsch, Sanger, Scheuermann, Sulzer, and Wodak, as well as the second *Deutsche Weise* in Baer and Lachmann's *"Minhag Ashkenaz"* version.

26 A geographical component may also be at play. Baer's distinction between Polish and German practice suggests such a factor rather than, or in addition to, the speculated evolutionary one. Other possible support for this may be deduced from Lachmann's manuscript, which titles the version in major *"Lefi Minhag Ashkenaz,"* as practiced in Ashkenaz, and the version discussed here, *"Lefi Minhag Polin,"* as practiced in Poland. Further support for this notion is reflected in Idelsohn's *Thesaurus* in which the major version by Sänger is included in the volume that features the tradition of South-German Jews, (Idelsohn, *Thesaurus*, vol. 7, 58-59), and the minor version is found in the volume of the East-European tradition (ldelsohn, *Thesaurus*, vol. 8, 180-81). I observe, however, that although the major version is only found in Germanic and West-European sources, some manuscripts of this origin feature the minor-lower extension version. For a detailed examination of these historical and geographical factors see Tarsi, "On a Particular Case of Tonal, Modal, and Motivic in Sources," 159-164.

predominating tonality is A minor. Indeed in all the examined cases (except for the alternative major-key version discussed above and in footnotes 25-26) there is a clear sense of "Western" gravitation toward a tonal center, even in the few that do not include many cadences on the minor tonic. In Example 3, if it were not for measures 11 and 36-37, there would be no question regarding the minor tonality at all. The possible doubt regarding the tonality, as well as the root of Glantz's explanation, stems of course from those segments that include foreign notes and cadences, whose combination with the foreign notes may point to a different tonality as well as a different tonic.

Heller's setting reflects a predominating minor tonality incorporating only a few elements that suggest otherwise. There are significantly more cadences on A (tonic) than on D (*finalis*). Moreover, these are primarily cadences that occur before choral responses, at the end of such responses, and at the end of each of the first three sub-phrases in the beginning (mm. 3, 7, 15, 18, 22, 26, 30, 35, and 42), all of which unequivocally establish the A-minor tonality. Furthermore, almost all of the segment endings in Heller's setting (his manuscript subdivides the liturgical sections into numbered segments) are on the minor tonic. Nevertheless, the presence of at least a potential for a *finalis* is also clear. Most significantly, the final cadence (mm. 23-24) of the second section, "*Avot*" in Heller's manuscript, ends on the *finalis*.[27] In addition to this function, the *finalis* appears as the ending note at a few structurally and motivically significant points.[28] In Heller's setting, it is found on the words *"d'chol bes jisra'el,"* as well as on *"uwizman koriw"* (mm. 10-12, 14 —15) and toward the end of the *Kaddish* on the *words "tuschb'choso w'nechemoso"* (mm. 36—37) and *"da'amiron b'ol'mo"* (mm. 38—39). A similar balance can be found in most other sources that feature this version of *Ne'ilah*.

Yet other sources exhibit a stronger and clearer presence of the *finalis.*[29] These sources feature a more balanced ratio between cadences on the *finalis* and on the tonic, and some of them use the *finalis* on the final cadences. Nevertheless, they are not essentially different from the sources represented by Heller in the context, motivic function, and structural function of the *finalis.* They differ more in the sense of how prevalent the *finalis* is, and whether or not it actually functions as the tone on which the section ends.

Although connected to different motivic and structural elements, cadences on the tonic and on the *finalis* in these settings are interchangeable so far as

27 Heller, *Kol T'hiIloh*, 298, no. 805.

28 The motifs connected to these points will be discussed later. In addition, it is here that we find an illustration of the perceived paradox regarding the *finalis.*

29 For example, see Gerovitsch, Grauman, Greenberg, Idelsohn, Ne'eman, Reizen, and Shnipelisky.

their location within the section is concerned. More than connection to a designated place, the tonic and the *finalis* primarily reflect either a tonal or a modal element—their placement within each section and phrase will depend on whether a modal or a tonal component is present. Thus the fact that a setting such as the one by Friedmann ends on D does not curtail its dominating A-minor tonality but instead reflects a modal element on the *finalis* rather than a tonal cadence on the tonic.

Obviously this creates what seems to be a paradox: depending on which element is placed at the end of a section, it would either end on the tonic or the *finalis.* Thus we may find cadences on the *finalis* in the middle of a section as well as final cadences that are not on the *finalis,* hence undermining and perhaps contradicting the meaning of the term *finalis.* But more than a paradox, this is one manifestation of the fact that terms borrowed from modal church music may need to be modified when applied to Ashkenazi prayer music. In this case, the *finalis* is literally a final note only within some modal components or musical fragments. Depending on the location and function of such a component in the musical or liturgical unit, it may be a literal *finalis,* a central tone, a point of reference for important structural cadences, that which is attached to specific musical gestures, or a marker for a distinct motif or phrase, most often of modal characteristic or origin.[30]

It seems that the *finalis* in Ashkenazi prayer music has inherent qualities beyond those discussed so far. It is a point of reference and a certain source of gravity that is different from that of a tonic, yet it is still felt whether it functions as a final tone or not. To the practitioner and participants conversant with the idiomatic musical language of this discipline, the *finalis* provides a sense of destination and completion, a feeling that this is where the music, the phrase, the section, or the idiomatic musical gesture is leading. It is not so

30 Although it involves a degree of speculation, in the case of the *Ne'ilah* music we may also consider this a product of either evolution or geography, separate from the topic discussed above and in footnote 26. In this view, the older versions of this prayer might have consistently ended with a cadence on the *finalis*, and in time, the tonal elements expressed here by the minor key became more prominent and led to an ending cadence on the minor tonic. This would be supported by the fact that the later versions (such as settings in Katchko, Alter, Spiro, Weisser, Ephros, Weisgal, Wohlberg, to a certain extent Greenberg, and the common practice in America) are primarily in minor, end on minor cadences (not Greenberg), include a strong presence of the minor's leading tone, and assign the *finalis* and its modal components to only few fragments within the section. But these later versions and variants as well as the American practice (much of which is reflected in the same sources) are also of East-European and Lithuanian origins.

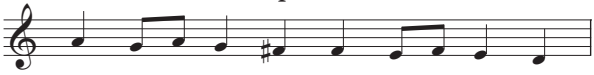
much inherent in the "music itself" (regardless of context and cultural conventions) as the tonic in tonal music. Rather it results from a conditioned sense of "home base" feeling that the culturally experienced participants intuit. It thus identifies, to various degrees, a sort of "modal gravity" as opposed to a tonal one—yet another facet of the genre that is primarily modal in nature. For instance, despite the clear sense of gravity toward the tonic on G in Examples 1 and 2, the conditioned insider expects the ending of the phrase (in Example 1) to be on D, and would sense a lack of completion or closure if it ended on a different note.

Perhaps this can serve as additional distinction between tonic and *finalis* in this context. If the phrase in Example 1 were to end on the tonic, the listener would feel a sense of tonal completion; however, because it did not end on the *finalis*, there is a lack of completion or closure so far as the idiomatic expression is concerned. Thus the presence and function of a *finalis* are felt whether it actually sounds in the music or not. In view of this observation, it is evident that Glantz's assumption that G is the tonic and therefore that the scale is Mixolydian is an outcome of his erroneous perception of the note's function, i.e., confusing the *finalis* for a tonic.

Thus the opening parts of the *Ne'ilah* prayer (mainly the *Kaddish* and the *Avot*) are yet another case in which both a tonic and a *finalis* on a note other than the tonic are present. As in some of the similar cases mentioned earlier, the tonality is minor and the *finalis* is located a fifth below the tonic. But unlike these cases, the *Ne'ilah* section presents a distinctive formation embedded in the intervallic area between the tonic and the *finalis*. It comprises a pentachord that does not diatonically belong to the minor and cannot be explained within its framework. This pentachord is identical to the lower pentachord of the major scale, including the major third, which introduces a note that is foreign to the present minor tonality. Thus it constitutes what I call a "lower extension"—an added major pentachord located below the tonic of the minor scale. The *Ne'ilah* music, therefore, is in minor with a major-pentachord lower extension, the lowest note of which is the *finalis.* This explains the tonal center, the tonality, and all of the present notes. In Example 3, the lower-extension paradigm accounts for the F# and the sense of D major in measures 11, 36 and 37, as well as the G# in measures 6, 17, 18, 20, 21 and 41, and the overall A-minor tonality.

Consistent with tonal versus modal perception, it seems there are two levels of musical scheme here that constitute a modality that is unique to this repertoire. One, in minor and above the tonic, is tonal and free of motivic considerations; the other is modal and contained within the lower extension,

which is attached mostly to specific motifs. Among these motifs are the "Three Festivals *B'rachah* cadence," the "*Revia* motif" and (in the *Ne'ilah* service) the "sequence motif". The latter is a pattern that appears in many different occasions throughout the liturgy. Its primary characteristic is the repetition of the basic motivic unit as a sequence.[31]



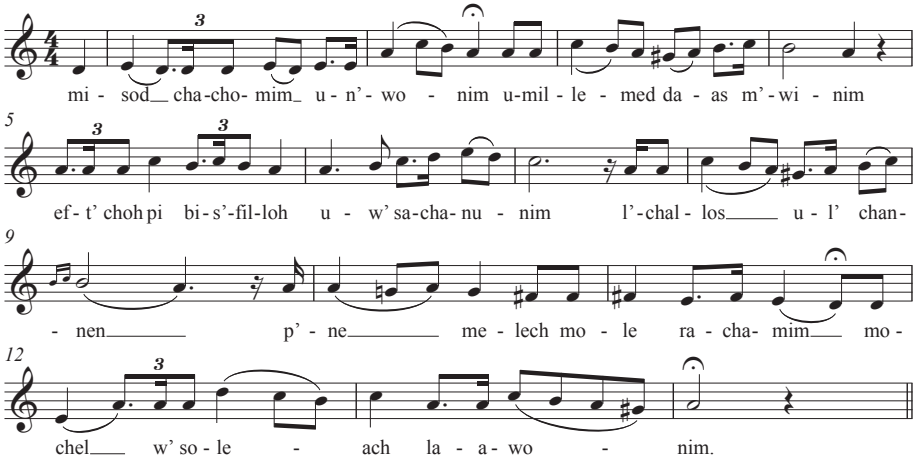
Example 5. Lower-extension sequence motif

Both the lower-extension explanation for this material, and viewing it not as a *Ne'ilah* peculiarity but rather as a general and *sui generis* phenomenon, are further supported by other facets of the repertoire that connect to various sections of the liturgy. Indeed Joseph Heller's setting may offer the link to such cases when we observe the *Ne'ilah* patterns as they continue beyond the *Kaddish* section. As discussed before, while the *Kaddish* is primarily in minor and the next section ends on the *finalis*,[32] the pattern continues through the lines of the following *Piyyut*, *"Misod Chachamim."* The final cadence of this phrase is in minor (see Example 6), and the final cadence of the next phrase is an even stronger affirmation of the minor tonality, incorporating the signature closing cadence for the High Holidays.[33] As Example 6 shows, there is no doubt that the prevailing tonality here is still A minor and the pattern for *Misod Chachamim* is located within the area of the lower extension.

31 I discuss this motivic phrase thoroughly in "Tonality and Motivic Interrelationships in the Performance Practice of Nusach," 22. Eric Werner also mentions it in his discussion of the "wandering motif" in "The Music of Post-Biblical Judaism," *The New Oxford History of Music: Ancient and Oriental Music,* vol. 1, ed. Egon Wellesz (London, New York, and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1959), 313-35.

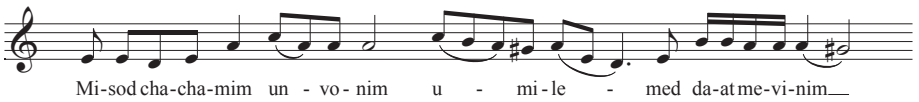
32 Heller, *Kol T'hilloh,* 298, end of no. 805.

33 Ibid. no. 807.



Example 6. *Misod Chachamim* in Heller's setting for *Ne'ilah*

A similar tonal and motivic context for *Misod Chachamim* can be found in practically all the *Ne'ilah* sources that include a setting for this liturgical poem. But more important, examining the motif for *Misod Chachamim* within this context can serve as the bridge between the lower extension's presence and function in the *Ne'ilah* setting and other sections of the repertoire. The *Misod Chachamim* text is not unique to the *Ne'ilah* service but appears throughout the entire High Holiday liturgy; its designated music constitutes a short tune (see Example 7) that follows the same pattern in all instances during the High Holidays in which this *Piyyut,* its equivalent,[34] or fragments thereof appear.



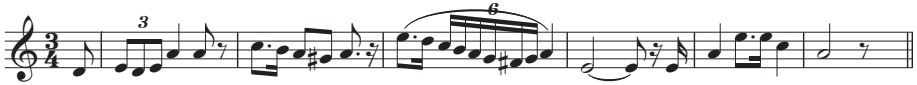
Example 7. *Misod Chachamim* tune as it appears throughout the High Holidays

Lower Extension in the Liturgy for the Three Festivals

The notes of the beginning of the chant pattern demonstrated in Example 7 are identical to those of the beginning of the *Ne'ilah* music, and the pattern itself falls within the ambitus of the lower extension. As such, its structural notes constitute $\hat{4}$, $\hat{5}$ below the tonic, and $\hat{1}$. The missing ultimate indicator of a lower extension—major $\hat{3}$—can also be observed in settings such as the

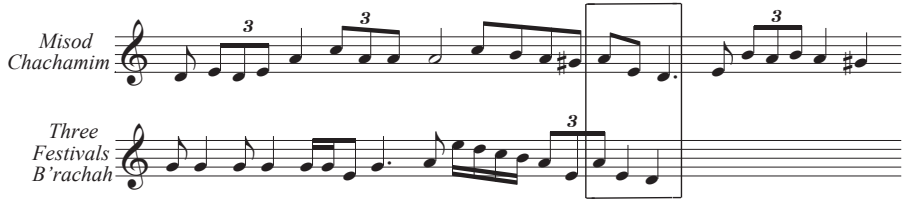
34 On some occasions, such as the second day of Rosh HaShanah or parts of Yom Kippur, as well as in a few occasional lines in some of the more traditional prayer books, different texts follow the same poetical, liturgical, and musical structure.

one for the High Holiday morning services by Heller.[35] Here the *Misod Chachamim* motif includes major $\hat{3}$ of the lower extension almost every time it appears throughout his setting of the morning services.



Example 8. *Misod Chachamim* tune containing an entire lower-extension pentachord (including ***the third degree***) from Heller's manuscript

The link between *Misod Chachamim* and other sections of the liturgy begins with its connection to the specific cadences associated with the *chatimot* in the Cantor's repetition of the *Amidah (Chazarat Hashats)*. The structural notes of *Misod Chachamim* (D, E, A) are the same as the notes of the Three Festivals *B'rachah* motif. Moreover, the pattern for *Misod Chachamim* itself actually contains the Three Festivals *B'rachah* motif.



Example 9. *Misod Chachamim* tune and the pattern for the Three Festivals *B'rachah*

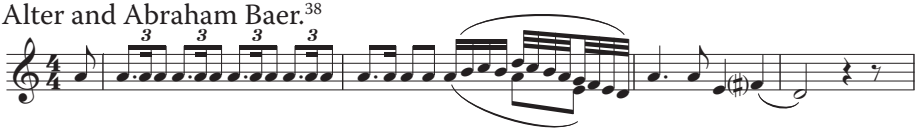
In measures 12-14 of Heller's setting (Example 3), we find both a *Misod Chachamim* motif and a Three Festivals *B'rachah* motif (on the words *"ba'agolo uwisman koriw").* Moreover, not only in *Ne'ilah* music but also in the context of the minor tonality in the Three Festivals morning services, the *B'rachah* cadence is located on the same scale degrees as the motif in *Misod Chachamim* (see last measure of Example 14). Thus patterns from the Three Festivals morning prayers are also a case in which both a tonic and a *finalis* exist, and as in the case of *Ne'ilah*, the *finalis* is located a fifth below the tonic.[36] As with the *Misod Chachamim* motif when it appears in the *Ne'ilah* pattern, the Three Festivals *B'rachah* motif is also embedded within the lower extension.

The Three Festivals cadence by itself does not provide proof that the Three Festivals music contains a scale with a lower extension like the *Ne'ilah* music. This pattern consists of only three notes; the third degree of the pentachord—the only one that marks a difference from the minor scale—is

35 Heller, *Kol T'hillah*, 54.

36 For further reference to the *B'rachah* motif in the music of the Three Festivals see Eliyahu Schleifer, "Ne'imat 'Nusach' Shel Shalosh Regalim Bemasoret Yehudey Ashkenaz: Pisuk Musikali Vesulam Yichudi," *Duchan* 13 (1991): 21-28.

missing. Nevertheless, because this motif appears within the frame of the lower extension in the *Ne'ilah* pattern and in *Misod Chachamim,* it reasonably follows that this is also the case in the Three Festivals *B'rachot*. But the most convincing support for this notion is provided by cases such as the one in Example 10 in which the third degree of the pentachord is in fact included.[37] This is also found in other manuscripts, among which are those by Israel Alter and Abraham Baer.[38]



Example 10. Three Festivals *B'rachah* containing an entire lower extension pentachord (including the third degree) from Ogutsch's manuscript

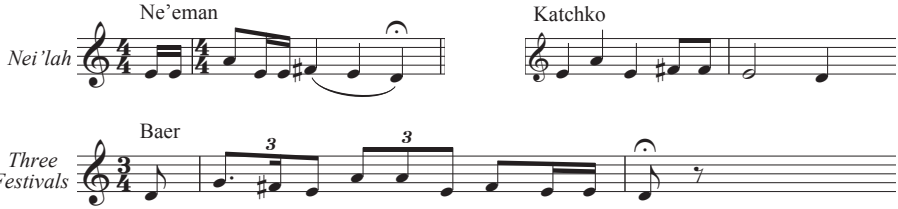
Concrete evidence for minor with the lower extension in the Three Festivals may again be drawn from a motivic similarity to the *Ne'ilah* music. Unlike the Three Festivals *B'rachah* cadence, which outlines the "frame" of the lower extension (its top and two bottom notes), an additional motif in the Three Festivals morning prayers features the lower extension in its entirety. In the Three Festivals morning services this motif usually opens a phrase, particularly continuing phrases (specifically on words such as "*vatiten lanu,*" "*vehasi'enu,*" and "*vehanchilenu*"). In his classes at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Brian Mayer calls this pattern the "*Revia* motif" because of its similarity to the musical rendition of a High Holiday cantillation motif named *Revia.*[39] The *Revia* motif is similar in contour and structure to

37 Fabian Ogutsch, *Der Frankfurter Kantor: Sammlung der traditionellen Frankfurter synogogalen Gesänge* (Frankfurt am Main: J. Kauffmann Verlag, 1930), 42.

38 Israel Alter, *The Festival Service: The Complete Musical Liturgy for the Hazzan* (New York: Cantors Assembly of America, 1967), 27, 29-30 and Baer, *Baal T'fillah,* 178-79. We should note that in the Baer manuscript we occasionally encounter the same pattern but with a lowered $\hat{3}$ instead of raised $\hat{3}$, although primarily in the form of a grace note. I believe, however, that this stems from Baer's intent to demonstrate a variety of options. The one relating to the minor version (e.g., as found in the manuscripts of Friedmann and Lewandowski) does not include a lower extension at all (see discussion of Three Festivals "first type," below). In the context of this version (pure minor), such cadences do not constitute a case of a lower extension.

39 Charles Davidson refers to this motif as "*Zarka* motif" for similar reasons. The same motif also appears in Lachmann's cantillation table for Lamentations (*Eicha*) as the cantillation motif for *Zakef Katan*. Although this case represents a legitimate exception, it is important to note that there is a serious methodological flaw in identifying cantillation patterns from scripture music in the context of liturgical prayer music. Despite this fact, the procedure remains ubiquitous among scholarly and semi-

some uses of the lower extension in the *Ne'ilah* service, especially at cadences. Compare the motifs from *Ne'i1ah* settings by Adolph Katchko and Joshua Ne'eman with the *Revia* motifs from the Three Festivals in Baer's manuscript (see Example 11).[40]



Example 11. Fragments from settings for *Ne'ilah* by Ne'eman and Katchko, and a *Revia* motif from Baer's setting for the Three Festivals morning service

The *Revia* motif can appear in numerous variant forms, which may occasionally include only an approximation of this motif or a free usage of its constituent elements within the lower extension (compare Example 11 to the beginning of Example 14, and see the words "*erew wowoker w'zohorojim,*" "*awosenu I'olom woed,*" *and* "*uwisfillosom*" in Baer's manuscript,[41] as well as several examples in the manuscripts of Katchko and Alter).[42]

This does not apply to all cases of Three Festivals music because there are several versions for the Three Festivals morning services within the Ashkenazi musical tradition. The sources of the canon reflect more than one choice of tonal and motivic structure and different relationships between the *Revia* motif, the lower extension, the final *B'rachah*, and the minor or major tonality. In general, there are three types of settings for the Three Festivals morning

scholarly discussions, in formal and semi-formal insider publications, and in numerous lectures, presentations and panels at professional conventions. I believe that this reflects the continuation of an agenda that can be traced to a pre-Idelsohn narrative, subsequently developed and transformed in Idelsohn's own work, and still prevalent today. This phenomenon, including its fundamental weaknesses, is examined in an article currently under preparation.

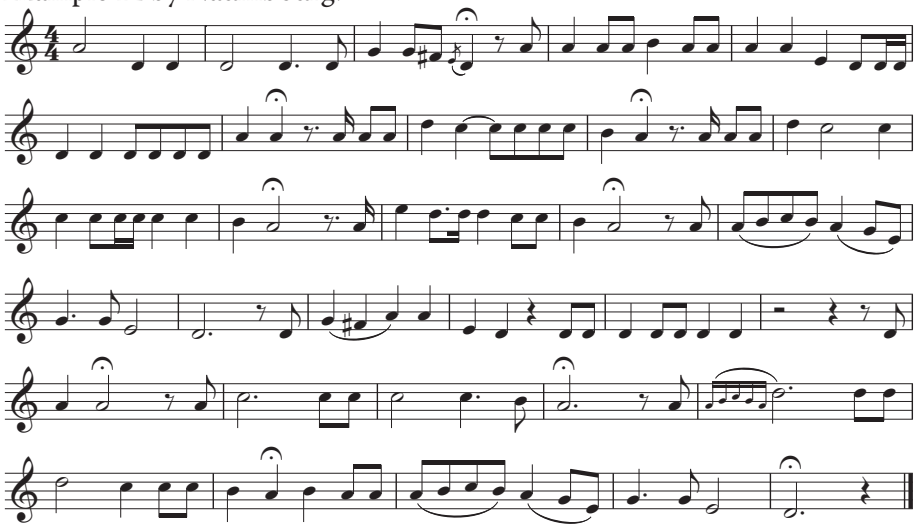
40 Adolph Katchko, *A Thesaurus of Cantorial Liturgy: For the Days of Awe,* vol. 1 (New York: Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion School of Sacred Music, 1951), 162; Joshua Ne'eman, *Nosah Lahazan, The Traditional Chant of the Synagogue According to the Lithuanian-Jerusalem Musical Tradition: Complete Service for the High Holidays,* vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Israel Institute for Sacred Music, 1972-73), 258; and Baer, *Baal T'fillah,* 176.

41 Baer, *Baal T'fillah,* 178, 176, no. 792, and 179, nos. 800 and 803.

42 Katchko, *A Thesaurus of Cantorial liturgy,* vol. 1, 130, 133, 137 and Alter, *The Festival Service,* 29, 31-32.

section that include these elements. The first type (as found in Friedmann's and Lewandowski's manuscripts for example) is in pure minor. It features a Three Festivals *B'rachah* motif and occasionally includes a *Revia* motif in minor. This type does not include a lower extension and contains no elements that are derived from a major pentachord or tetrachord.

The second type includes a mixture of minor and major elements. It may be perceived as a modal mixture containing elements from two or three tonalities, which creates a blend in which it can be difficult to ascertain the overall tonality or modality.[43] Most cases of such mixtures consist of two tonalities, major and minor, with the minor tonic located a fifth above the major, as in Example 12 by Naumbourg.[44]

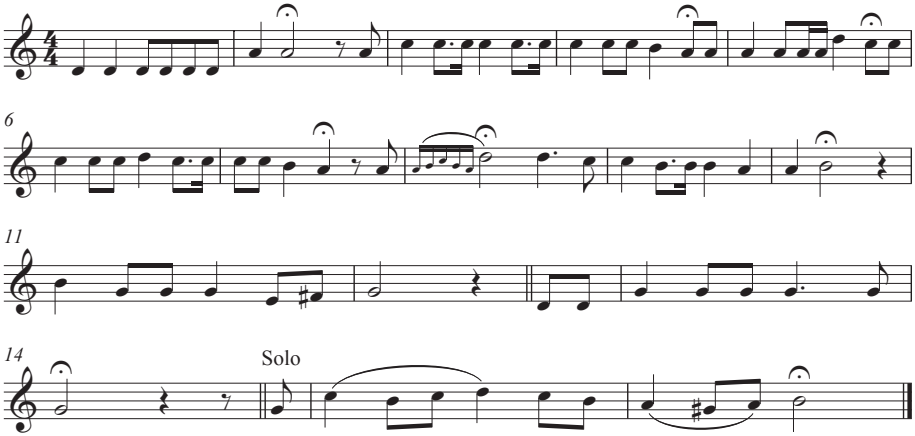


Example 12. Minor and major (a fifth below) in Naumbourg's setting for the Three Festivals morning services

43 In Brian Mayer, "Degrees of Uniformity and Variation in the Ashkenazi Musical Tradition for the Three Festivals" (DSM dissertation, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1998), 138, where I first noticed these examples, the author uses the expression "modally ambiguous" when discussing material that reflects this type. In his work, Mayer's explanation of phenomena similar to the ones explored here is different from my theory. It should be noted, however, that Mayer's work concerns itself only with what I have designated here as the first and second "types." It, therefore, does not cover the versions and variants that call for a "lower extension" explication.

44 Samuel Naumbourg, *Semiroth Yisrael: Chants Liturgiques des Grandes Fêtes (*Paris: the author, 1847; reprint, New York: Sacred Music Press Out of Print Classical Series, 1954), 168.

Naumbourg's manuscript may even suggest a third tonality or tonicization. In addition to the A-minor and D-major tonalities, a hint of a temporary G major is created in measures 8-12 of Example 13.

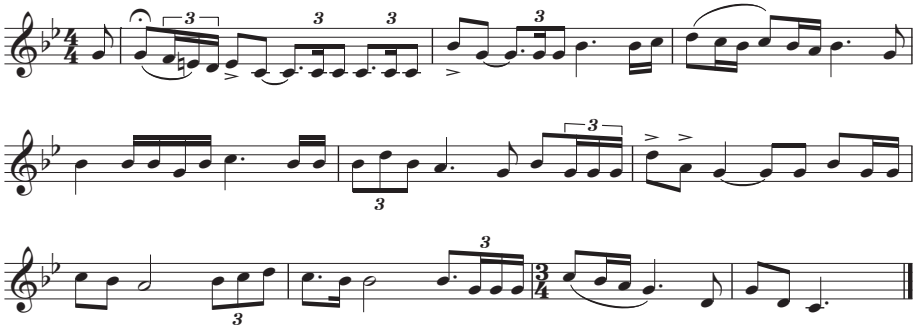


Example 13. A section from Naumbourg's Three Festivals setting with a suggestion of an additional tonality (G major)

Regardless of the number of possible tonalities, the major key is a fifth below the minor tonic in all examples of such mixture. This suggests a minor-lower extension with the same relationship between the respective tonic and *finalis.* Nevertheless, in most cases of the "second type," the prevailing tonality cannot be determined. It is, therefore, not possible to conclude whether this is a clear case of minor with a major lower extension or two tonalities of equal value. This ambiguity disappears when we consider a third type of Three Festivals music.

This type, which is the clearest demonstration of a lower extension within a minor tonality in the Three Festivals, clarifies the second type because the minor tonality prevails and the major tonality is contained within a lower extension. We can also observe that the settings that depict this type include both a Three Festivals *B'rachah* motif as well as a *Revia* motif within the lower extension. As such they constitute a more forthright expression of what is suggested by the tonal relationships in the second type.[45]

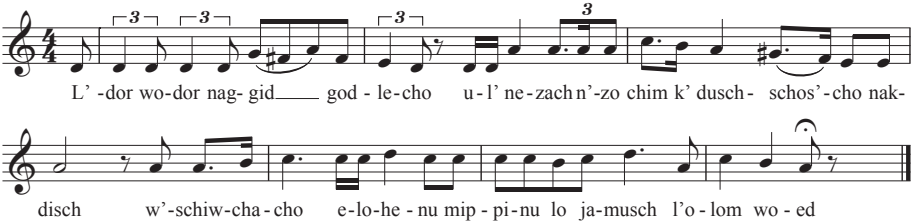
45 Alter, *The Festival Service,* 28.



Example 14. "Third type" Three Festivals version from Alter's manuscript

As in the case of the different versions and variants of the *Ne'ilah* pattern, further exploration of possible geographical or historical-evolutionary factors could be productive. An initial perception may indicate a tendency of later sources to feature the third type. Conversely, this type also seems to be more prevalent among the East European and American sources as well as the common practice in the American synagogue,[46] hence the possibility of both historical and geographical factors. Nevertheless, as in the case of the *Ne'ilah* versions, this contention is still a somewhat crude hypothesis that requires further exploration.

Another expression of a lower extension in the Three Festivals morning services is found in Example 15 at the end of the *K'dushah* on the phrase *"ledor vador nagid godlecha."* [47]



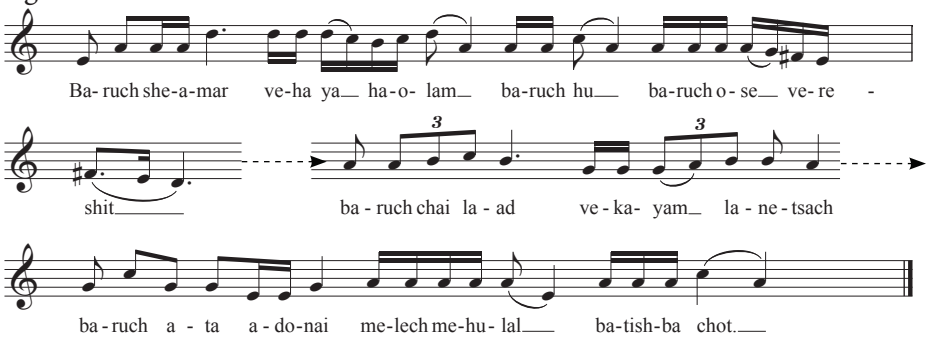
Example 15. End of the *Kedushah ("Ledor Vador")* from Baer's manuscript

46 For a discussion of the East European influence on American synagogue music see Tarsi, "Observations on Practices of *Nusach* in America," 180-97.

47 Baer, *Baal T'fillah, 176, n. 789.*

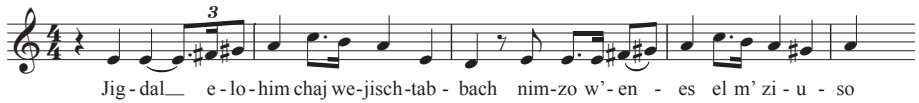
Other Liturgical Sections in Minor with a Lower Extension

Example 16 illustrates another case of the lower extension, which is found in the *P'sukey D'zimrah* of the High Holiday morning prayers (beginning with the words "*baruch she'amar*"). There is no evidence here of a *finalis* in the same sense as in the previous examples. Nevertheless, the section features a *Revia* motif that is identical to its form in the Three Festivals and contained within a lower extension pentachord. The minor tonality is clearly established with a strong cadence at the end of the pattern and is not contradicted by any pattern prior to that. Interestingly, the opening motif of the pattern spells out the three notes from the Three Festivals *B'rachah* cadence in an unfolding ascent.



Example 16. Fragment from the preliminary section of the High Holidays morning service ("*Baruch She' amar*")

Other instances, in the High Holiday evening services, suggest a similar phenomenon. In the Sulzer setting for the High Holiday evening version of the *Piyyut* titled "*Yigdal*," the Three Festivals *B'rachah* motif appears within a minor key.[48]

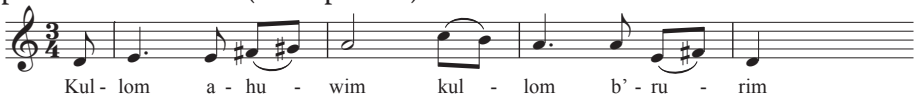


Example 17. "*Yigdal*" from Sulzer's manuscript

This example alone does not prove that the motif is also a case of the lower extension, although in view of the previous example we may suggest that it is implied. Baer's setting for the same liturgical poem, however, consists of a similar melody that does include a major $\hat{3}$ and depicts a complete lower

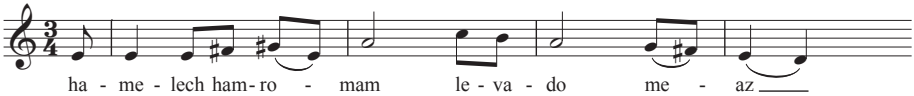
48 Salomon Sulzer, ed. *Schir Zion: Gesänge für den israelitischen Gottesdienst,* 2 vols. (Leipzig: M. W. Kauffmann, 1905, revised version of the first edition by Joseph Sulzer, Vienna, ca. 1838), no. 296.

extension.[49] Later in Baer's manuscript a similar pattern is applied to a text that appears in the morning service. This is parallel to where the Three Festivals *B'rachah* motif appears in Sulzer's setting and a full lower-extension pentachord unfolds (Example 18a).[50]



Example 18a. From Baer's setting for the High Holidays morning service

The same pattern appears during an early part of the High Holiday morning service in Maier Levi's manuscript (Example 18b).[51] Levi's variant, too, shows a clear case of the lower extension.



Example 18b. Segment from the early part of the High Holidays service from Levi's manuscript

In the last three examples a minor tonality is established before introducing a lower-extension element, whereas in some settings for *"chamol al ma'asecha,"* which appear much later in the High Holiday additional morning service (*Musaf*), a lower-extension *Revia* motif begins the section. In Example 19, a clear minor cadence occurs only at the end of the segment.[52] Similar cases can be found in Heller's manuscript as well as those of Elieser Gerovitsch and Todros Greenberg.[53] These examples within the minor tonality also feature the *ahavah rabbah* mode whose tonic is located a fourth below the minor tonic. The symbiotic attachment of *ahavah rabbah* to the harmonic

49 Baer, *Baal T'fillah, no.* 989. As another manifestation of the lower-extension phenomenon, this setting is in A minor, yet the key signature contains F#, the final cadence is in D major, and it ends on the *finalis* of the lower extension.

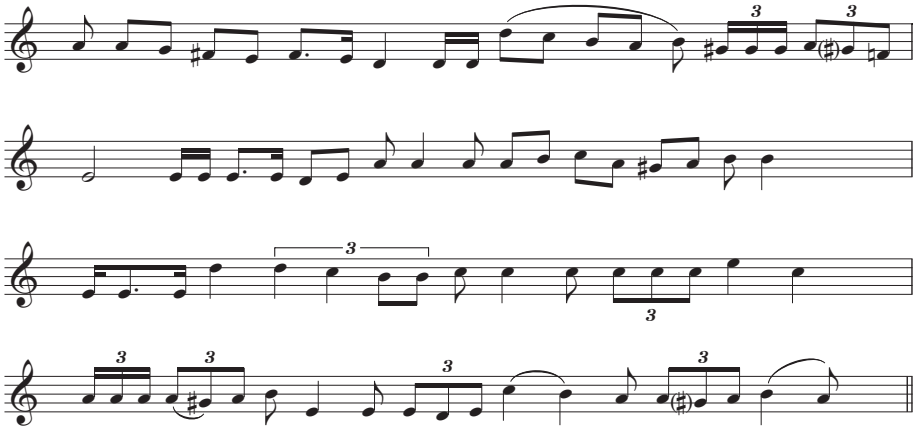
50 Ibid. *no.* 1029.

51 Maier Levi, *Esslingen Machzor* (Esslingen, ca. 1845), 32.

52 This example is taken from materials prepared by Cantor Max Wohlberg as the core of a curriculum for the training of cantors, which he established at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York in 1952. For a more detailed discussion of this unique source see Tarsi, "Observations on Practices of *Nusach* in America," 211-12 n. 20.

53 Heller, *Kol T'hilloh,* 150; Elieser Gerovitsch, *Shire Tefillah: Synagogen-Gesänge für cantor und gemischten Chor* (Rostov am Don: S. A. Brodsky, 1897), 20-21; Todros Greenberg, *T'filot Todros,* ed. Sholom Kalib (New York: Cantors Assembly, 1978), 143.

minor a fourth above it, which I name "equivalent minor," is beyond the scope of this discussion.[54] What pertains to our subject is that they share the same note collection, so that the notes of *ahavah rabbah* and its "equivalent minor" are the same; only the tonics differ. *Ahavah rabbah* on E, for example, is "equivalent" to A harmonic minor as both scales comprise the same notes. This symbiosis is prevalently expressed in various forms throughout the repertoire. Seen in this light, one musical characteristic of *ahavah rabbah* also constitutes a case of the lower extension.

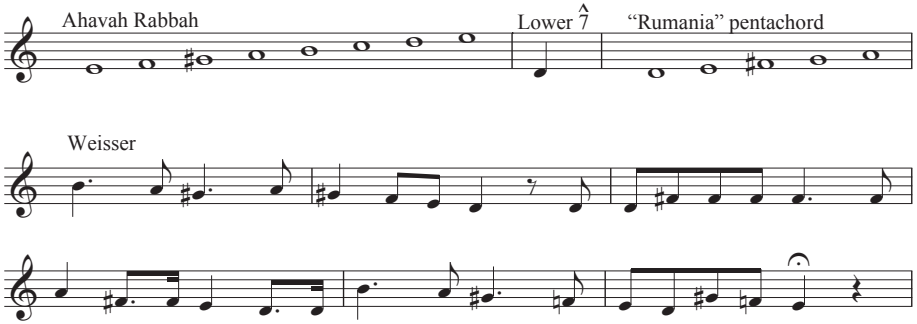


Example 19. Segment from the additional High Holidays morning service from the "Wohlberg materials"

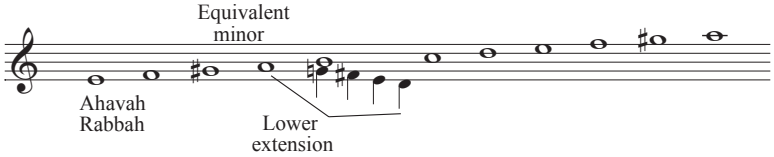
What is colloquially referred to in some professional cantorial circles as the "Rumania motif",[55] relates to a pattern within *ahavah rabbah* in which a pre-concluding phrase may begin with a motif based on a major scale pentachord whose tonic is the lower $\hat{7}$ of the *ahavah rabbah* scale. In Examples 20a and 20b, in *ahavah rabbah* on E, such a motif would consist of notes borrowed from the scale of D Major. The "Rumania motif" therefore constitutes a lower extension of the *ahavah rabbah* "equivalent minor."

54 For an initial discussion of this phenomenon see Tarsi, "Tonality and Motivic Interrelationships in the Performance Practice of *Nusach*," 6-9.

55 This colloquialism is used primarily within the professional circles that in one way or another are connected to the Jewish Theological Seminary. Charles Davidson created the expression "Rumania motif" in order to help cantorial students memorize it, using a segment from the song "Rumania, Rumania" by Aaron Lebedeff.



Example 20a. "Rumania motif" pentachord in relation to the *ahavah rabbah* scale and as reflected in a fragment from Weisser's manuscript



Example 20b. "Rumania motif" pentachord as a lower extension of the "equivalent minor" in *ahavah rabbah*

Lower Extension and Plagal Modes

Since both lower extensions and plagal modes relate to musical occurrences that lie below a key-reference tone,[56] the concept of plagal modes may appear relevant to the subject of the lower extension. Nevertheless, although related to a similar phenomenon, the two are mutually exclusive. As in other terms and definitions borrowed from church music, the concept of plagal modes should be approached with caution, paying attention to its original meaning.[57]

56 Being the *finalis* in the case of the plagal church modes and the tonic in the lower extension, there is no term to indicate this function in both cases, hence my somewhat inadequate made-up expression "key-reference tone." This, in fact, is at the core of one of the differences between the two cases (see Example 21).

57 Cases within the repertoire of Ashkenazi prayer music that can be shown to resemble plagal modes in the original sense of the term are rare. The study that uses this term the most in the context of Jewish prayer music is Levine's *Synagogue Song in America*. From an examination of all the contexts in which the term is used in Levine's work, I could only conclude that it refers in general to any musical material or occurrence that takes place below the tonic. One other passing allusion to it is Daliah Cohen's suggestion that some Jewish songs may be perceived as being in "hypo harmonic minor" in *Shema Veyeda: Shel Hamarkivim Hamusikalim* (Jerusalem: Akademon, Beit Hahotsa'ah Shel Histadrut Hastudentim, 1979), 43, 153. I believe, however, that

There are several fundamental differences between the church plagal modes and the lower extension, which make the term plagal mode inappropriate in this case.[58] The most important difference between scales with lower extensions and plagal modes is that the latter are primarily an expression of a difference in ambitus from their respective authentic modes. As such, the notes included in each pair of authentic and plagal modes are the same, and the notes in the lower tetrachord of the plagal mode are identical to those of the upper tetrachord in the authentic. In the case of a lower extension the notes above the tonic[59] and the ones below it constitute different pentachords that belong in different scales.[60] Another significant difference is that the lower end of the ambitus in plagal modes is structurally set a fourth below the *finalis*[61] whereas the lowest structural note of the lower extension is a fifth below the tonic.[62]

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although Cohen's view is technically correct, the case it mentions is part of a much larger phenomenon, part of which I have briefly touched upon in the discussion of *ahavah rabbah* and "equivalent minor."

58 There are in fact a few places in Ashkenazi prayer music in which some aspects of plagal modes may be present. But even if technically applicable in terms of ambitus description, the term does not suit this material as it does the church modal system, nor does its application provide any meaningful insight for Ashkenazi prayer music. The pattern for the *Shabbat Minchah* is in minor and the combination of motifs and free singing constitutes a collection of musical phrases whose ambitus is from a fourth below the tonic to about a fifth above it. A similar case is the Lithuanian-American version of the first section of the Friday night service, *"Sh'ma Uvirchoteha,"* (see Tarsi, "Observations on Practices of *Nusach* in America," examples 5a, 5b, and 6).

59 For the sake of comparison I must momentarily set aside the definition of *finalis* in Jewish music and refer to the *finalis* in the plagal church modes as the equivalent of the tonic in the case of the lower extension, at least so far as their scale location is concerned (see Example 21).

60 The closest approximation of such a phenomenon outside of Jewish music is the notion of mixed modes or mixed tones as discussed by theorists such as Aiguino, Marchetto, Tinctoris, Vicentino, Zarlino, and others. See for example, Johannes Tinctoris, "Tonus mixtus" and "Tonus commixtus" in *Terminorum Musicae Diffinitorium* (ca. 1475); Johannes Tinctoris, *De Natura et Proprietate Tonorum (Concerning the Nature and Propriety of Tones)*, trans. Albert Seay, (Colorado Springs: Colorado College Music Press, 1967), 15-17, 19-20, 24-25; and Gioseffo Zarlino, *Istitutioni harmoniche* (Venice, 1558), 385-86. I am grateful to Ryan McClelland for drawing my attention to the relevance of this phenomenon and to Frans Wiering of Utrecht University for reference assistance.

61 Johner, *A New School of Gregorian Chant,* 52.

62 This is partially related to Curt Sachs's looser definition of plagal modes as the

Although some elements of Gregorian chant may be detected in Ashkenazi prayer music, such instances (e.g., *Akdamut*, see Example 1) are extremely rare. When they do appear, they usually are transformed into an entirely new and perhaps *sui generis* pattern. In this respect, one of the differences between plagal and authentic modes in church music is in the location of the recitation tone (the fifth in authentic modes and mainly the third in plagal modes).[63] In contrast, a significant portion of Ashkenazi prayer music does not designate specific recitation tones at all while another portion includes them on several scale degrees. Some prayer modes feature them on an assigned scale degree (but not always $\hat{5}$). There is no parallel to plagal church modes in which the recitation tone within the same mode changes because of a change in the mode's ambitus. Moreover, most cases of a lower extension have no specific recitation tone at all.

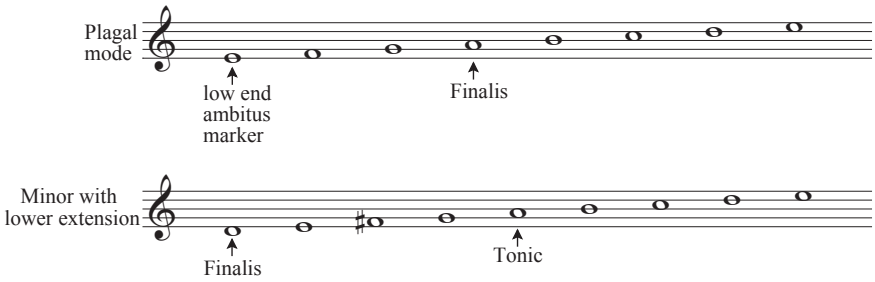
The differences regarding recitation tones provide further evidence that plagal modes and scales with the lower extension belong to different genres. This is directly related to the other area of difference—the mixture of tonal and modal elements in the scales with the lower extension, which by definition cannot be part of the plagal modes. An immediate consequence of this is, of course, the presence of both a tonic and a *finalis* in the former. The note in scales with the lower extension that is equivalent to the *finalis* in plagal church modes is the tonic, which has a fundamentally different function. By the same comparison, the note that is equivalent to the lower marker of the ambitus of the plagal modes is the *finalis* in the cases of the lower extension. Thus while in plagal modes the ambitus begins below the *finalis*, in scales with lower extensions the *finalis* is at the lowest end of the ambitus.

Example 21. Structural scalar differences between plagal modes and scales with lower extension

Indeed, searching for similarities between church music and the Ashkenazi tradition of prayer music may generate more confusion than constructive in-

combination of a pentachord on top of a tetrachord as opposed to authentic modes, which consist of a tetrachord on top of a pentachord (Curt Sachs, *The Rise of Music in the Ancient World* (New York: Norton, 1943, 65). Thus, even by this definition, the lower extension cases do not fall under this category because the (artificially synthesized) scale they reflect consists of two pentachords, and each pentachord marks the frame of a different class of designated musical occurrences.

63 Johner, *A New School of Gregorian Chant,* 52.



sight. Describing the scale with the lower extension as a unique phenomenon, separate and distinct from plagal modes, is not only clearly justified by the former's unique traits as demonstrated here. It is also one more case in which identifying areas of overlap as well as drawing boundaries and describing differences between church music and Ashkenazi prayer music are necessary to further clarify and deepen our understanding of this repertory.

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The Hidden Subdivisions of S'lihot

by Joseph A. Levine

S'lihot Defined

Among liturgical poems (piyyutim) that are inserted within the body of statutory prayer (matbei'a[1]) on special occasions, the penitential ones known as s'lihot (from *s'lihah* or "forgiveness") are recited only on fast days. Before the age of printing, choice and number of both piyyutim and s'lihot was left to the hazzan who added and changed according to the spirit of the times and the preference of local custom.[2] S'lihot follow the literary format of all piyyutim in first extolling God as the just and eternal Sovereign over all, but they contrast that with our temporality and moral weaknesses that lead to transgression against God and humankind. S'lihot open an avenue of absolution for those transgressions and of rapprochement with God. That is true especially on Yom Kippur, when an entire section of Forgiveness prayers—Seder S'lihot[3]—appears in all five services: Ma'ariv; Shaharit; Musaf; Minhah; and Ne'ilah.

The first s'lihot of identifiable attribution were not poetic but biblical quotes[4] seeking atonement for Israel's trespasses. They often used divine forgiveness of our ancestors' misdeeds as precedent for God to overlook our wrongdoings as well. The biblical verses had long been part of private penitential prayer.[5] During the Second Temple era, people would repeat short scriptural phrases that they knew by heart:

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1 The "coin" of blessings minted by our sages, tractate *B'rakhot*: JT 9b; BT 40a.

2 A. M. Habermann. *Al HaT'fillah* (Lod: Habermann Institute), 1987: 52. Ezra Fleischer. *Shirat HaKodesh Ha-Ivrit Bi-Y'mei HaBeinayim* (Jerusalem: Keter), 1975: 72; Hayyim Kieval, *The High Holy Days,* David Golinkin & Monique Sussman Goldberg, eds. (Jerusalem: Schechter Institute), 2004: 252, citing the Italian *Mahzor B'nei Roma* & the Yemenite prayerbook, the *Tikhlal*.

3 Wilhelm Bacher, Meyer Seligsohn, Cyrus Adler & Francis L. Cohen, eds. *Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls), 1905, s.v. "Selihah," citing *Tanna de-Vei Eliyahu Zuta,* chapter 23, end.

4 Kieval, *The High Holy Days,* 2004: 242, citing the listing of Psalm 130 ("From the depths I call upon You") as part of the old Palestinian liturgy for fast days (Mishnah *Ta'anit*, 2.3).

5 Habermann, *Al Ha-T'fillah,* 1987: 51. Hayyim Leshem, *Shabbat u-Mo'adei Yisrael,* Vol. I (Tel Aviv: Niv), 1965: 108-111, notes the mention of "s'lihah" or "s'lihot" a dozen times in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Additionally, Nehemiah 9: 17b (*Elo'ah s'lihot, hanun v'-rahum, erekh apayim v'-rav hesed,* after Exodus 34: 6) may have prompted universal recitation of that text during penitential worship.

Hatanu lakh

We have sinned before You, (Judges 10: 10);

Hatanu he'evinu v'-hirshanu

We have sinned, and caused perversion and wickedness,

(First Chronicles 6: 37);

Hatanu v'-avinu v'-hirshanu u-maradnu v'-sor mi-mitsvotekha umi-mishpatekha

We have sinned, caused perversion and wickedness, rebelled and strayed from Your commandments and precepts (Daniel 9: 5).

The Jerusalem Talmud in fact provides the following s'lihah for an individual to recite on Yom Kippur:

> My Master, I have sinned, done evil and taken a wrong path. I have now turned back from that wayward path and no longer do what I formerly did. May it be Your will, my God, to grant atonement for all my transgressions, to pardon me for all my iniquities and to forgive me for all my sins (JT *Yoma*, 45c.)

From the 5th century onwards, collective s'lihot earned a permanent place in the hearts of worshipers. Notwithstanding their popularity, the insertion of any type of piyyut within statutory blessings often aroused rabbinic opposition,[6] which led to constant tension between local custom (minhag) and Jewish law (halakhah). One rabbinic compromise was to move piyyut out of matbei'a sections like the Sh'ma and its Blessings, and into neutral parts of the service.[7] Seder S'lihah represented one such neutral part.

Over time, the distance between piyyut and matbei'a narrowed considerably; many current fixtures of the liturgy that began as optional—even rabbinically unacceptable—insertions such as Kol Nidre (We renounce all inadvertent vows to God) and U-N'taneh Tokef (We recount the Day's awesome holiness), eventually became obligatory prayers. Piyyut and matbei'a may thus be seen as way stations along a continuum; what one generation considers kavva-

6 On grounds that they "constituted a disruption of the proper continuity and coherence of the service"; Eli Munk, *The World of Prayer, Vol. II, Sabbath and Festivals,* Gertrude Hirschler, tr. (New York: Philipp Feldheim), 1963: 106. Among others who objected were: Moses Maimonides; David Abudarham; Joseph Albo; Jacob ben Asher; Judah Halevi; Abraham Ibn Ezra; Jacob Emden; and David Kimhi.

7 Ruth Langer, *To Worship God Properly—Tensions between Liturgical Custom and Halakhah in Judaism* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press), 1998: 171.

nah—devotional material above and beyond obligatory requirements—the next generation regards as keva (fixed liturgical formulations).[8]

The Categories of Piyyutim

Piyyutim generally fall into four main categories,[9] "each poem or group of poems in the sequence leading up to a prescribed station or destination in the liturgy:"[10]

Ma'aravot (from Ma'ariv "Evening service"—in blessings that surround the Sh'ma of Ma'ariv);

Yots'rot (from Yotseir "Creator of Heavenly Luminaries"— in blessings that accompany the Sh'ma of Shaḥarit);

K'rovot (from *ḥazzana d'-kareiv*[11] "the cantor who approaches" [the prayer lectern]—in the first three or four blessings of the Amidah for Shaḥarit, Musaf, Minḥah and Ne'ilah—consisting of up to ten parts); and

S'liḥot (a special penitential section recited on fast days after the Amidah of Shaḥarit and Minḥah, and on Yom Kippur at every service).

Ma'aravot subdivide into Piyyutim that appear just before the following blessing "closures" (ḥatimot):[12]

Ha-Ma'ariv Aravim ("Bringer of Evening");

Oheiv Amo Yisrael ("Who Loves His People Israel");

Mi Kamokha ("None Like You");

Adonai Yimlokh ("God Reigns Forever");

Ga'al Yisrael ("Israel's Redeemer"); and

Haporeis Sukkat Shalom ("Spreader of Peace").

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8 After Jakob Petuchowsky. *Understanding Jewish Prayer* (New York: Ktav), 1972.

9 While many more categories appeared—and disappeared—at different periods, a case can be made for subsuming the types that still survive, within the "main" headings listed here, along with their subdivisions. Kinnot, for example, are a form of s'liḥot specific to the fast of Tishah B'Av; piyyutim added to the *Nishmat* prayer that concludes P'sukei D'-Zimra on holy days and those recited in honor of a New Month—as well as those written for Birkat HaMazon , the Haggadah and Hoshanot—are largely forgotten today.

10 T. Carmi, ed., *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse* (NY: Penguin), 1981: 19.

11 Derived from *Midrash T'hillim* on Ps. 19.

12 Marcus Jastrow. *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Babli, Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature* (NY: The Judaica Press), 1996: 513; Mishnah *P'saḥim*, 10. 6.

Yots'rot subdivide into:

Yotser ("Creator of Light");
Ofan ("Heavenly Creatures");
Me'orah ("Celestial Luminaries");
Ahavah ("Abounding Love");
Zulat ("Incomparable God");
Mi Kamokha ("None Like You");
Adonai Malkeinu ("God Our Sovereign"); and
G'ulah ("Redemption").

K'rovot subdivide into:

R'shut ("Permission");
Magein ("Protector");
M'-hayyeh ("Resurrector");
M'-shulash ("Thrice-Sanctified");
Atah Kadosh ("You Are Holy");
Eil Na ("By Your Divine Leave"); and
Silluk ("Ascension" [to the K'dushah or Sanctification]).[13]

Since the s'lihot that have been written and continue to be written outstrip in number all other piyyut types combined,[14] I've based this study on Israeli scholar Ezra Fleischer's premise: "The 'hierarchy' of piyyut forms in their classical post-talmudic period is not proven, but logical."[15] Accordingly, unlike the proverbial sightless individuals who grasp an elephant's slithery tail and think it's a snake—or its stumpy leg and imagine it's a tree—I believe it more prudent to step back in order to give readers a broader perspective of penitential liturgical insertions as a whole.

The Categories of S'lihot

It's true that—as a piyyut category— s'lihot seem to have defied comprehensive categorization. Yet, in the absence of a formal hierarchy, various authorities

13 The above order of piyyutim is based upon Fleischer, *Shirat HaKodesh*, 1975: 137-26, and Ismar Elbogen, *HaT'fillah B'-Yisrael* (Leipzig, 1913), translated from the German by Yehoshua Amir (Tel-Aviv: Dvir), 1972: 158-161 and into English by Raymond Scheindlin (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society), 1993.

14 Kieval, *The High Holy Days,* 2004: 24.

15 Fleischer, *Shirat HaKodesh,* 1975: 67

have posited the *logical* existence of subdivisions within Seder S'lihah, each scholar adding another piece to the puzzle.

"We distinguish s'lihot by the locations that are reserved for them," posits Joseph Bloch... "if they serve as introits they are called **P'tihah**."[16] Adolph Coblenz[17] sees s'lihot as "expressive of the accompanying moods of penitence, of supplication and of hope," moods which I have shown elsewhere[18] to be expressed through the unique music of their equivalent s'lihah genres—**Viddui, T'hinnah** and **Nehamah**—Confession, Supplication and Reconciliation. In this assertion I second Abraham Idelsohn: "The order of S'lihot was and continues to be: confession (Viddui); begging forgiveness (S'lihah u-T'hinnah); and words of consolation (Divrei Nehamah)."[19] Ezra Fleischer mentions a "framework for s'lihot, based on very ancient principles... which included Viddui and closed with Tahanun."[20] Hayyim Kieval speaks of "introductory prayers [P'tihot],... confession of sins,... petitions for divine grace and aid in time of stress,"[21] in that order. *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (1905) entry on "Selichah" substantiates my claim that Vidduyim are a form of s'lihot—and not a separate entity.[22] That is important because a recent mahzor mislabeled Seder S'lihah as "S'lihah *u*-Vidui"—Forgiveness *and* Confession —as if they belonged to two distinct piyyut categories.[23]

Nevertheless, for every mislabeling, one can cite a proper labeling as counterbalance. In the succinct manner of medieval mahzorim, *Mahzor Vitry*[24] gives only the word "Viddui" after summing up the Amidah of Ma'ariv for Yom Kippur eve, signaling that the Seder S'lihah to follow will *open with confes-*

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16 Joseph Bloch, ed., *Sha'arei T'fillah* (Paris: Communauté de la Victoire, 1924), 1983 edition, Introduction: LIII.

17 Preface to *Selichoth for the First Day*, Joseph Weinstein & Hyman Saye, eds. (Baltimore: Chizuk Amuno Congregation), 1940: 3.

18 Joseph A. Levine, "The Three-Part Selicha Mode," *Journal of Synagogue Music,* Vol. 28, No. 1, Fall/Winter 2001: 3-10.

19 Abraham Zvi Idelsohn. *Tol'dot ha-N'ginah ha-Ivrit* (Tel-Aviv: Dvir), 1924: 267; the present writer's translation.

20 Fleischer, *Shirat HaKodesh,* 1975: 408.

21 Kieval, *The High Holy Days,* 2004: 245.

22 Bacher et al, *The Jewish Encyclopedia,* 1905, s.v. "Selihah"—*Earliest Public Selihot, Among Sephardim and Ashkenazim, Divergence in Rituals.*

23 *Evening Service for Yom Kippur*, Preliminary Edition, Edward Feld, ed. (New York: The Rabbinical Assembly), 2005: 22.

24 Simon Hurvitz, ed., after the British Museum MS (Berlin 1893; Jerusalem: Aleph), 1063. Kieval, *The High Holy Days*, 2004: 245.

sion. The Orthodox *ArtScroll Siddur*[25] does likewise before giving instructions for "reciting the confessional before Tahanun" after the Weekday Amidah of Shaharit. It opens this free-standing S'lihah unit with Viddui (*Ashamnu*, "we have sinned"), continues with T'hinnah (*Adonai, Adonai*, The Thirteen Attributes of God's Mercy) and closes it with Nehamah (*Ki Atah, Adonai, tov v'-salah*; (For You are Good and Forgiving").

Vidduyim are not bunched exclusively at the end of a S'lihah section, nor do they consist of only the two well-known texts that list specific types of sin, *Ashamnu* and *Al Heit.*[26] Instead, most Vidduyim refer to sin in general terms only. Just so, Tehinnot do not limit themselves to the prescribed biblical formula *Adonai, Adonai, Eil Rahum v'-Hanun,* but rely on the richness and diversity of piyyutistic s'lihot in pleading for divine mercy. Nehamot need not necessarily reference the verb *N-H-M* ("to comfort"); there exist so many alternative scriptural promises of God's willingness to overlook our missteps. Nor is the fairly common insertion of P'tihot —introductory paragraphs—merely a hypothetical attempt to create order where none prevails. The fact is that all four genres—**P'tihot, Vidduyim, T'hinnot** and **Nehamot** (with P'tihot remaining optional)—do combine to form identifiable subdivisions within the Seder S'lihah of every tradition whose mahzor, siddur or anthology I have examined.

The objective is and always has been to evoke in worshipers a feeling that all is not lost. No matter how dire the circumstances that may have led to our blaming our own egregious behavior as direct cause of a specific communal—or national—calamity, God stands ready to extend a hand to sinners: *Atah notein yad l'fosh*'im.[27] I agree with Ezra Fleischer that there is logic to both the content and placement of piyyut in our liturgy, including the penitential poems known as s'lihot. If every subdivision within Seder S'lihah did not include a Nehamah, for example, we would have had to invent the genre; of what use is all our breast-beating—without the anticipation of expiation from guilt?

As already mentioned, I am not the first observer who has managed to discern boundaries and sort out priorities within the vast body of available s'lihot. Abraham Idelsohn noted that "forgiveness presupposes confession."[28]

25 Nosson Scherman, ed., *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur* (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah), 1984: 119a.

26 Found in Nosson Scherman, ed., *The Complete ArtScroll Machzor for Yom Kippur* (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah), 1986: 130; 132.

27 Ibid. page 752.

28 Idelsohn, *Jewish Liturgy*, 1932: 43.

That is probably why *Avinu Malkeinu*, the litany of forty-four[29] invocations recited by cantor and congregation line by line following the Amidah on fast days, begins with a confession: *hatanu l'-fanekha* ("Our Father, our King! We have sinned before You"). Only afterwards does it take the liberty of offering supplications: "erase all evil decrees; erase all record of our guilt; remember us for pardon, etc."[30]

Elie Munk supports that position with BT *Yoma*, 87b: "Mar Zutra taught that if a person said, 'Truly, we have sinned,' no more is necessary.'" To that he adds, based on the passage in Deuteronomy describing repentance as a pre-requisite for prayer (30: 10-14), "first comes the admission that one has sinned *b'-fikha* [through verbal utterance] *uvi-l'vav'kha* [through service of the heart]."[31] Ismar Elbogen concurred, and logically added a second link to the s'lihah-subdivision chain: "There was no reason to beg forgiveness from sin unless it was preceded by Viddui... and requests for help flowed naturally from the Viddui... these are called T'hinnot".[32]

Hayyim Kieval agreed with Idelsohn, Munk and Elbogen: "S'lihot passages from the Bible were provided with a liturgical framework consisting—among other types—of P'tihah, Viddui and T'hinnah, the admission of sins [being an] indispensable prerequisite... to the supplications for Divine forgiveness."[33] This statement omits what I consider the last essential part of a s'lihah unit—the Nehamah—"a standard concluding motif in rabbinic literature, especially midrash."[34] Indeed, the Rabbinic Kaddish (*Kaddish D'-Rabbanan*) that served as a congregational response to the conclusion of public Torah exposition during the Talmudic period, developed as a "consolation" over the temporary silencing of God's words.[35]

Kieval does apply the term Nehamah to prophetic verses in the Malkhuyot section of the Rosh HaShanah Musaf service, "because they express the consolation—nehamah—which the triumph of God's Kingship will bring to

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29 In Orthodox practice; *ArtScroll Machzor for Yom Kippur*, p. 144.

30 Abraham Millgram. *Jewish Worship* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society), 1971: 234.

31 Munk, *The World of Prayer*, Vol. II, 1963: 239; 210, citing Maharil and *Mateh Moshe* § 818.

32 Elbogen, *HaT'fillah BeYisrael*, 1972: 166-167.

33 Kieval, *The High Holy Days*, 2004: 245-246; 258.

34 Ruth Langer, personal communication to the writer, August, 2005.

35 *Masekhet Sof'rim*, 19: 12; Sifrei to Deuteronomy 32: 3; Rashi on BT *Sotah*, 49a.

Israel."[36] The fact that these prophetic verses express *consolation* is the same reason why Nehamot verses from throughout the Tanakh are appended to Vidduyim and T'hinnot in the S'lihot liturgy, and why the following coda was later appended to the Rabbanan / Readers / Mourners Kaddish:

> *Oseh shalom bimromav, Hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu*
>
> The One Who brings harmony on high will surely bring harmony to us as well.[37]

The Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds[38] both stress that the early Prophets habitually closed their forebodings of doom with words of consolation; the Yerushalmi calls them *divrei nehamah*, the Bavli refers to them as *divrei tanhumim*. The Glory Hymns that close Sabbath and Festival services today—Ein Keiloheinu, Aleinu, An'im Zemirot and Adon Olam[39]—perform the same liturgical function. How much more so are Nehamot needed on Yom Kippur! That is why *Mahzor Vitry* ends its Seder S'lihah on Kol Nidrei night with *Oseh shalom bimromav*,[40] the most widely used nehamah of all, hardly recognized as such because it was hidden in plain view.

S'lihot Subdivisions Examined in Detail

Based upon the above incomplete attempts at sequencing penitential piyyutim, it is my contention that, determined by their content and liturgical function, four main genres of s'lihot have combined over time to form identifiable subdivisions—independent units that appear by themselves—within the larger Seder S'lihah on fast days in general and on Yom Kippur in particular. Here are some of the names by which the four s'lihah genres have been known:

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36 Kieval, *The High Holy Days*, 2004: 222, n. 76.

37 We know that *Oseh Shalom* came later because it is composed in Hebrew, whereas the Kaddish proper is composed in the Aramaic vernacular spoken earlier in Erets Yisrael.

38 JT *B'rakhot*, 8d; BT *B'rakhot*, 31a.

39 Found in Philip Birnbaum, ed., *Daily Prayer Book* (New York: Hebrew Publishing Co.), 1949: 407; 413; 415; 423.

40 Hurvitz, *Mahzor Vitry*, 1963: 391.

P'tihah ("opening")—includes **Mukkadimah** or **Hakdamah** ("introduction"),[41] **Sh'vahim** or **Hoda'ah**[42] ("praises" or "acknowledgement"), and either **P'sukim Shel Rahamim**[43] ("verses invoking God's mercy," in Hebrew) or **P'sukei D'-Rahamei**[44] ("verses invoking God's mercy," in Aramaic).

Viddui ("confession")—includes **Hatanu**[45] ("we have sinned," the word with which its refrain begins, a kind of poetic confession that often served in place of Viddui) and **Hata'einu**,[46] a variant of the preceding type, its refrain beginning with the word *hata'einu* ("our sins");

T'hinnah ("supplication") or **Tahanun**[47] ("entreaty")—includes **S'lihah**[48] (plea for "forgiveness"), **Tokhahah**[49] ("admonition"), **Bakkashah**[50] ("petition"); **Litaniyah**[51] ("litany"), **Z'-akah**[52] ("cry") and **Atirah**[53] ("plea");

Nehamah ("comfort," consolation," "reconciliation," "reconsideration")[54]—includes **P'sukei D'-Rahamei**[55] ("verses invoking God's mercy) and either **Divrei Nehamah** or **Divrei Tanhumim** ("words of consolation").

Part of the confusion over s'lihot terminology arises from the fact that all the above-listed genres were given different names in various communities—and sometimes, the same name for *different* genres! The *Seder* of Amram Gaon refers to s'lihot in general as *P'sukei Ritsui S'lihah* ("verses invoking

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41 Fleischer, *Shirat HaKodesh*, 1975: 410; Leon J. Weinberger, *Romaniote Penitential Poetry* (New York: American Academy for Jewish Research), 1980: 5; the latter referring to the Greek-speaking Jews of the Byzantine Empire.

42 Leon Nemoy, s.v. "Karaites," *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter), 1972, 10: 781-782.

43 Hurvitz, *Mahzor Vitry*, 1963: 345.

44 Weinberger, *Romaniote Penitential Poetry*, 1980: 5.

45 Fleischer, *Shirat HaKodesh,* 1975: 203; Bacher et al, *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1903, s.v. "Selichah": *Development of Selichot.*

46 Leket Piyyutei *S'lihot Me-eit Payy'tanei Ashkenaz V'-Tsorfat*, from a MS of Daniel Goldschmidt (after Zunz), edited by Avraham Fraenkel (Jerusalem: M'kitsei Nirdam), 1993: 13.x

47 Weinberger, *Romaniote Penitential Poetry*, 1980: 45.

48 Idem.

49 Ibid. page 34.

50 Ibid. page 45.

51 Ibid. page 11.

52 *Seider Siftei R'nanot* (Tripoli: n. p.), 1925: 4.

53 Bacher et al, *Jewish Encyclopedia,* 1905, s.v. "Selihah": *Supplication.*

54 Jastrow, *Dictionary of the Targumim*, 1996: 895; all four readings of the verb *N-H-M* are valid.

55 Yaakov Levi, ed., *Seder ha-S'lihot k'-Fi Minhagei ha-Sefardim* (Jerusalem: Yad ha-Rav Nissim), 1995: 40

God's willingness to forgive"), whereas the Karaite liturgy terms them *P'sukei T'shuvah* ("verses of penitence"). Saadyah Gaon's Siddur designates them as *Raḥamaniyot* ("mercies"), while the Ba'alei Tosafot preferred *P'sukei D'-Raḥamei* for all genres of s'liḥot.[56] That last designation, Aramaic for *Maḥzor Vitry*'s *P'sukim shel Raḥamim*, would seem to obliterate the line between P'tiḥot and Neḥamot, a conclusion easily reached if we were to judge by the emphasis on God's "forgiving" nature in both genres. Thus the Viddui of an 18th-century Ashkenazic maḥzor in Holland,[57]

> *Ḥatot n'ureinu yi-mahu ka-ananim*
>
> Let the sins of our youth be erased like the clouds,

exactly prefigures in passive voice the active-voiced wording of that subdivision's Neḥamah:

> *V'-salaḥta la-avoneinu ki rav hu*
>
> And may You forgive our sin, though it be great.

Not only that, but the melodic pattern of the prayer mode (*nusaḥ ha-t'fillah*) to which the Viddui and the Neḥamah are both chanted is the same.[58]

Another complicating factor is that Bakkashot—the name by which T'ḥinnot were known in some communities—often substituted for P'tiḥot because of their beauty. The Persian rite offers a collection of them as private invocations of God's mercy, to be read silently prior to the start of public worship.[59] These Bakkashot, essentially T'ḥinnot, often open with confessional statements and close with consolatory verses; in effect, they constitute complete s'liḥah units unto themselves.

Then there is the matter of *poetic* genres, whether form-based, theme-based or event-based, which bear their own appellations. They either apply to piyyut in general and not to s'liḥot specifically,[60] or they sound a leading

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56 Tosafot to BT: *B'rakhot*, 5a; *Megillah*, 32a; *Avodah Zarah*, 8b.

57 Shlomo Katz, ed., *Seder HaS'liḥot L'-Khol HaShanah* (Amsterdam: 1994 reprint of the 1712 edition), page 103.

58 Joseph A. Levine. *Synagogue Song in America* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, Inc.), 2001: 123, a-b, which juxtapose a Neḥamah setting by Aron Friedmann (1901: No. 398a) with a Viddui setting by Josef Heller (1914, Vol. II: No, 260).

59 *Mikra'ei Kodesh*, translated from Judeo-Persian by Simon Ḥakham, edited by Simḥah Sason, Jerusalem: Levi, 1902.

60 T. Carmi, ed. & tr., *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse*, (New York: Penguin), 1981: 20. The Pizmon form was especially rampant: "a 9th century payy'tan known as 'The Anonymous'… wrote over 500 Pizmonim which he grafted onto the K'rovot of an earlier colleague (Simeon ben Megas, c. 6th century), each K'rovah containing up

motif that may recur in any of the services on Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur in several piyyutistic guises,[61] or they refer to the martyrdom suffered by a particular community.[62] For these reasons the following poetic terms will not enter our discussion:

Sh'niyah ("two-lined");

Sh'lishiyah ("three-lined");

Shalmonit ("complete"—i.e., four-lined);

Pizmon (with a "refrain");

Akedah (referring—even obliquely—to "The Binding of Isaac"); and

G'zeirah (decrying a specific "persecution").

The Italian rite[63] offers an illustration of the problem. The six subdivisions of its S'lihot section for Yom Kippur Eve include five poems that feature a Pizmon. Two of the five Pizmonim function as Petihot, while three of them serve as Nehamot. Even more confusing, one of the two P'tihah-Pizmonim (page 162) and one of the three Nehamah-Pizmonim (page 174) feature the identical refrain,

Ba-erev hi ba'ah, uva-boker hi shavah
In the evening she arrives,
And in the morning she departs (Esther 2: 14).

The Emergence of S'lihot as a Separate Category of Piyyut

Originally, piyyutim served the statutory blessings and liturgical verses between which they appeared, interposing words borrowed from the liturgical passage that followed. The borrowed words constituted what is known as a "transitional passage" (*tur ha-ma'avar*).[64] The inserted transitional passage may have been metaphoric or formulaic, but it always referred to the bless-

to ten parts that can serve as receptacles for multiple piyyutim.

61 This is particularly true of the *Akedah* type. Elbogen, *HaT'fillah B'-Yisrael*, 1972 & 1993: 183; Fleischer, *Shirat HaKodesh*, 1975: 470; Leon J. Weinberger, *Jewish Hymnography—A Literary History* (London: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization), 1998: 327. As an example, the Macedonian payy'tan Mordecai ben Shabbetai's so-called "*Akedah*"*—Eili, M'falti* ("My God, My Refuge") for recitation in early-morning S'lihot services during the month of Elul, opens every strophe with the word *Boker* (morning), and neither mentions the Binding of Isaac nor alludes to it.

62 Elbogen, *HaT'fillah B'-Yisrael*, 1972 & 1993: 183; Gezeirot are found almost exclusively in the Franco-German rites.

63 Menahem Emmanuel Hartoum, ed. and tr., *Mahzor Minhag Italyani l'-Fi ha-Minhag b'-Khol ha-K'hillot* (Rome: Carrocci), 1988: 152-189.

64 Fleischer, *Shirat HaKodesh*, 1975: 70-72.

ing or verse into which it led, and hazzanim treated it as a musical bridge to the impending *nusah ha-t'fillah*. In sum, the *tur ha-ma'avar* functioned as a P'tihah in miniature.

Later, more specialized piyyutim that beseeched God's mercy or lamented national calamities—s'lihot—broke away from the K'rovot chains of up to ten piyyutim that were added to the first four blessings of the Amidah on holy days. At first, s'lihot were limited to weekday fast days,[65] appearing in the sixth blessing of the Daily Amidah. That blessing, called "S'lihah,"[66] begins with the combined supplication/confession *S'lah lanu, Avinu* ("Our Father, forgive us despite our having sinned"), and ends with the consolation *hannun, ha-marbeh lis-lo'ah* ("Gracious One, Who pardons abundantly"), so embedded in every section of our liturgy is the recognition of Israel's ongoing need for Nehamah. In the Amidot of Yom Kippur, s'lihot are grouped within the fourth blessing—K'dushat Hayyom (Benediction of the Day)—or as a Seder S'lihah later on in the service when the Amidah is not repeated, as in Ma'ariv.

Transitions between individual s'lihot differ from those between piyyutim, whose connecting links are smooth and without obvious breaks or patches. Liturgical custom has surrounded piyyutistic s'lihot with discrete opening and closing passages, a complex framework of biblical verses, phrases or single words garnered from throughout Tanakh. These fragments were rearranged to carry a liturgical message conducive to a mood of penitence, and often provided with a repeating refrain tagged by a word such as *Aneinu* ("answer us") or a phrase such as *Hu Ya-Aneinu* ("He will surely answer us")[67]

One such piyyutistic s'lihah, *Eil, Melekh Yosheiv...* ("God, judging mercifully"), functions as a Viddui, poetically acknowledging our having missed the mark:

> *moheil avonot amo... marbeh mehilah l'-hata'im u- s'lihah l'-fosh'im*
> forgiving Your people's sins... generously forgiving sinners and pardoning transgressors.

For that eventuality, the Midrash assures us, God Himself has "taught us to recite the Thirteen Attributes of Divine Mercy (*Adonai, Adonai*—merciful, compassionate and patient God..."; Exodus 34: 6-7).[68]

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65 Ibid. page 71.

66 *ArtScroll Siddur*, p. 102. The Daily Amidah's opening blessings 1-3 feature praise, as do its closing blessings 17-19; its middle section—blessings 4 -16—contains petition exclusively (BT *B'rakhot*, 34a).

67 Found in *ArtScroll Machzor for Yom Kippur*, p. 140.

68 Based on BT, *Rosh HaShanah* 17b. The commentators Onkelos, Abraham

The function of *Adonai, Adonai* in this liturgical context is that of a T'hinnah, central part of the s'lihah unit in which it appears:

Adonai, Adonai, Eil rahum v'-hanun, erekh apayim...

an enumeration of God's Thirteen Merciful Attributes. All that is missing from this supplication in the form of a biblical list is an imperative verb reminding God to *exercise* the merciful attributes. That verb is provided by a third verse, linked here to the previous Viddui and T'hinnah, but actually separate from them in the Bible (Exodus 34: 9).

V'-salahta la'avoneinu ul'-hatateinu u-n'haltanu

Therefore, pardon our iniquity and our sin; claim us for Your own.

This clears the way for God's assurance (and our consolation) that forgiveness is indeed at hand. For that purpose, two more verses (Numbers 14: 19-20) are quoted (my emphases):

S'lah na la-avon ha-am ha-zeh...

May it please You to forgive Your people's sin...

Va-yomer Adonai, salahti ki-dvarekha

and God said, "I forgive, as you have requested."

A better reassurance that Israel's prayer is heard on High we could never find! That is why the tripartite subdivision of ***Eil, Melekh Yosheiv / Adonai, Adonai, / Va-yomer Adonai*** takes pride of place within the Seder S'lihah of all rites, and is recited multiple times in many of them.

Forgiveness (or Lack of It) in the Bible

Prayers asking divine pardon first appear in Genesis chapter 18, where the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorroh fail to acknowledge their monstrous behavior. It is Abraham who pleads for God to spare them despite their sinfulness (verse 23). He has no choice but to admit the inhabitants' wrongdoing; God had already mentioned it as justification for punishment (verse 20). "Will You also destroy the [few] righteous with the [many] wicked?" asks Abraham. This argument seems effective in theory but fails the test when put

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ibn Ezra, Rashi and Sforno all interpret the preceding verse, Exodus 34: 5, thus: "And Adonai descended in the cloud and stood with him (i. e., Moses), and called the Ineffable Name, **did Adonai**" (*va-yikra v'-Sheim***,** *Adonai);* a reading that acknowledges the Masoretic placement of a strong pausal disjunctive—*tipp'ha*—after "Name" and before the second "Adonai." This pausation scheme differs from the one in an almost identical passage in Genesis (12: 8) where Masoretic placement of the *tipp'ha* is after "called": "And [Abram] called, **the name Adonai** (*va-yikra***,** *v'-Sheim Adonai)*."

into practice; God does not find the agreed-upon minimum of ten righteous individuals, and destroys both cities (verses 19-20).

The same pattern recurs in the Book of Exodus (32: 31). There, it is the entire congregation of Israel who transgress by worshiping a molten calf and not owning up to the enormity of their misdeed. Instead, Moses must step forward to act as their advocate. Despite his plea that God forgive them (verse 32,) the people are afflicted with a plague (verse 35). Moreover, even the divinely prescribed formula for calling upon the name of God—*Adonai, Adonai, Eil Rahum V'-Hanun…* promised in 33: 19 and given in 34: 6-7—does not absolve the guilty ones. Verse 7 states: *v'-nakeh **lo** yenakeh* ("but God does **not** remit all punishment"; my emphases).

We find a reason as to why this is so in Numbers chapter 5, verses 6-7, which specify that *personal* confession is required for absolution from sin (my emphases):

> If a man or woman commits **any wrong** against a person [***mi-kol hattot** ha-adam*] whereby he trespasses against YHWH, when that person feels guilt, he shall confess the wrong [*hattat-*] he has done, and make reparation in its entirety.

From a parallel passage in Leviticus (5: 5-6), Moshe Greenberg draws the inference "that the *confession* must be performed *before* the sacrifice is offered" (my emphases):[69]

> When [a soul] shall be guilty… he shall **confess** that he has sinned… and he shall **bring his trespass offering**."

Only then shall "the priest make atonement for him."

Confession of wrongdoing nowadays is accomplished by means of a Viddui, whether biblical or piyyutistic. Bringing one's trespass offering has transmutated into offering verbal supplication through a T'hinnah, again: biblical or piyyutistic. But the order in which these two steps of T'shuvah (repentance) are accomplished has never changed—first confession; then supplication—as Maimonides[70] stresses (my emphases).

> If a person transgresses any biblical commandment—whether willfully or inadvertently—he or she must repent of the misdeed and confess it before God… Even in the time when *Hattat* and *Asham* sacrifices were offered, those sacrifices did not atone for sin unless it was **preceded**

69 Moshe Greenberg. *Biblical Prose Prayer* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 1983: 30; citing the interpretation of J. Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience* (Leiden), 1976: 105.

70 Philip Birnbaum, ed., *Mishneh Torah Le-HaRambam*, Abridged Edition, (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company), 1944: 36.

> **by repentance in the form of confession**… The same holds true for individuals who are found guilty of crimes deemed worthy of capital or corporal punishment; execution or flogging does not bring atonement until they repent and confess. It goes without saying that this applies to monetary malfeasance which harms another… as it is written [Numbers 5: 6]: "If a man or woman commits any wrong against a person."

Greenberg derives the complete process of repentance—involving the elements of Viddui and T'hinnah as well as that of divine reconciliation, Nehamah—from First Kings (8: 34-35), Solomon's prayer at the First Temple's dedication[71] (my emphases).

> Should Your people Israel be struck by an enemy because they have sinned against You, let them turn again to You and **confess** before You and pray and **offer supplication** to You in this house; then You will hear in heaven and **forgive** Your people Israel.

Greenberg also notes how the Book of Jonah, chapter 1 reinforces the notion that God is ever ready to withhold punishment when humans openly admit their wrongdoing and resolve to do better.[72] Neil Gillman refers to this apparent change in God's formerly implacable stance as "intra-biblical revisionism… because 'preemptive repentance'… enters into the picture between the sin and the punishment."[73] Instead of waiting for repentance to *follow* punishment as in the earlier prophets, Jonah takes the initiative and sets in motion a three-step penitential process of confessing, pleading and reconciling with God *to avert* punishment on behalf of the ship's crew (chapter 1: 12), a third-person advocacy tactic that had not worked for Moses on behalf of Israel at the time of the molten calf (Exodus 32: 33). First comes confession (my emphasis):

> And [Jonah] said unto [his shipmates], "Take me up and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you, for **I know that for my sake** this great tempest is upon you."

Jonah's confession (**Viddui**) will bring forgiveness for his shipmates, but not before they themselves cry unto God:

> We beseech You, Adonai, let us not perish for this man's life and lay not upon us innocent blood, for You have done what is right in Your judgement.

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71 Greenberg, *Biblical Prose Prayer*, 1983: 28.

72 Ibid. pp. 15-16.

73 Neil Gillman, *Encountering God in Judaism* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights), 2000: 116-118.

The crew's supplication (**T'hinnah**) helps turn the tide:

> The sea ceased from her raging (verse 15).

At that point the men genuinely repent (verse 16) and reconcile themselves (**Nehamah**) with "the God of heaven" that Jonah had mentioned earlier (verse 9), a god they had never before worshiped and whose connection with the tempest they hadn't perceived. Now they see things differently (my emphasis):

> Then the men feared Adonai greatly, and **offered a sacrifice unto Him**, and made vows.

God's reconciliation with the crew did not include Jonah, with whom He still had unfinished business, namely the carrying out of a divine command to denounce the city of Nineveh for its wickedness.

A second tripartite s'lihah unit unfolds in the Book of Daniel, chapter 9 (my emphases).

Viddui (verses 14-15):

> I prayed to… God and made **confession**, saying, … "We have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from Your commandments."

T'hinnah (verses 16-19):

> Hearken to the prayer of Your servant and to his **pleading**. And for Your own sake, Adonai, cause Your face to shine upon Your sanctuary which is desolate.

Nehamah (verses 20-24):

> The angel Gabriel… came to me… and said,… "At the beginning of your supplications a word went forth… for you are greatly **beloved**… to **expiate** all transgression."

Here we clearly see the connection that Scripture makes between *reconciliation* and *forgiveness*; Daniel's Nehamah arrives with s'lihah from God.

We find a third proto-s'lihah unit in Psalm 130, this time complete with Introduction and a characteristic psalmodic shift from first-to-third person in the final verse[74] (my emphases):

P'tihah (verses 1-2):

> Out of the depths ***I*** called You, Adonai; listen to my cry, be attentive to my supplication;

74 This shift from first to third person towards the end of a Psalm occurs in 55 of the 150 Psalms; Alfred Sendrey, *Music in Ancient Israel* (New York: Philosophical Press), 1969: 130.

Viddui (verse 3):

If You kept account of sins, O Lord… who would survive;

T'hinnah (verses 4-5):

Yours is the power to forgive… ***I*** [therefore] look to Adonai, ***I*** await His [forgiving] word;

Nehamah (verses 7-8):

For with Adonai there is love and great power to redeem. It is He Who will redeem ***Israel*** from all its iniquities.

Forgiveness in the Liturgy

The three-part Forgiveness formula of Confession, Pleading and Consolation —based on the biblical precedents in First Kings chapter 8, Jonah chapter 1, Daniel chapter 9 and Psalms 130—quite naturally carried over into the liturgy. Ezra Fleischer specifies weekday fasts as the primary occasions when penitential biblical verses were added to the liturgy.[75] Over the centuries, piyyutistic s'lihot filled the gaps between verses, forming units that found a home in the Yom Kippur liturgy and were eventually organized as a special section, Seder S'lihah, as discussed earlier (see note 3). The subdivisions within Seder S'lihah took their cue from the High Priest's three confessionals during the Avodah rituals of the Day of Atonement.[76]

Here is the High Priest's first confessional, in its essence.[77]

Viddui: *hatati… ani u-veiti* ("I and my household have sinned…")

T'hinnah: *kaper na… l'-fanekha* ("forgive the sins we have committed before You…");

Nehamah: *ki va-yom ha-zeh… lifnei Adonai* ("for it is written, 'On this day you shall be purified before God'").

In both the Ashkenazic and Sephardic rites for Shaharit, Musaf and Minhah on Yom Kippur, introductory P'tihot[78] to the s'lihah units evolved from biblical verses or parts of verses, similarly to the process by which Vidduyim,

75 Fleischer, *Shirat HaKodesh* 1975: 71.

76 Mishnah *Yoma*, 3.8, 17-19, based on Leviticus 16, specifically verse 17: "when he [the High Priest] has made atonement for himself, for his household, and for the whole congregation of Israel."

77 *ArtScroll Machzor for Yom Kippur*, p. 560; the second and third confessionals appear on pp. 562 & 566, respectively.

78 Ibid. pp. 104, 113, 584, 676. In the Sephardic rite, David De Sola Pool, ed., *T'fillot L'-Yom Kippur, K'-fi Minhagei Ha-Sefardim B'-Amerikah* 1974: 51-53, 173, 174, 175; see also Kieval, *The High Holy Days,* 2004: 245.

T'hinnot and Nehamot developed. One of the longest P'tihot in Ashkenazic usage—

Shomei'a t'fillah, adekha kol basar yavo'u

All flesh comes before You, the One Who hears prayer (Psalms 65: 3)[79]

—is the second of two P'tihot that traditionally open the first unit of the Seder S'lihah on Yom Kippur Eve. It strings together 42 biblical quotes so seamlessly that the P'tihah reads as if its verses had originally appeared in that exact sequence.[80]

S'lihot were positioned in different parts of the service by different communities. Italian and German Jews adhered to the dictum of the 9th-century Gaon in Sura—Sar Shalom—adding Seder S'lihot to the final Amidah blessing,[81] while Sephardic and Polish custom placed it after the Amidah.[82] Vidduyim, T'hinnot and Nehamot of individual units within the larger S'lihot section sometimes alternate with Piyyutim that do not fall under the heading, "Penitential." The American Sephardic mahzor offers a parade example; it lumps together piyyutim and s'lihot of all categories and genres—before, within and after individual subdivisions, without any apparent logic.[83] This muddies the water for anyone who is seeking a clear-cut ending of one unit and a discrete beginning of the next. Nor has Ashkenazic helter-skelter scattering of local favorites throughout S'lihot sections helped in this regard; some European communities used to distribute leaflets annually just before the High Holy Days, announcing that particular year's lineup.[84]

Anthropologist Laurence D. Loeb recorded his surprise at the freedom allowed sh'lihei tsibbur (communally appointed leaders of prayer) in 1960s

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79 *ArtScroll Machzor for Yom Kippur*, p. 104.

80 Also typical of this piyyut form is the *Hodu L'Adonai Kir'u Vi-Shmo* following *Barukh She-Amar* in the P'sukei D'-Zimra section of Shaharit; Scherman, *ArtScroll Siddur*, 1984: 60-64. A non-Ashkenazic parallel to *Shomei'a T'fillah* in length is a Nehamah that follows *Adonai, Adonai* to conclude the sixth unit of the Yom Kippur Eve S'lihot section in the Italian rite—52 verses strung together in piyyut style; Hartoum, *Mahzor Italyani*, 1988: 184-189.

81 David De Sola Pool, ed. *T'fillot L'-Yom Kippur, K'-fi Minhagei Ha-Sefardim B'-Amerikah* 1974: 51-64; 177-192.

82 Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, *Jewish Liturgy* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston), 1932:44-45; *ArtScroll Siddur*, p. 102.

83 Lawrence A. Hoffman, *The Canonization of the Synagogue Service* (South Bend, IN: Notre Dame University Press), 1979: 112-114.

84 Daniel Goldschmidt, ed., *Mahzor LaYamim HaNora'im—L'Fi Minhagei B'nei Ashkenaz L'-Khol Anfeihem,* Vol. II*, Yom Kippur* (Jerusalem: Koren), 1970: 13, n.7.

Iran, not only in the interpretation of various texts, but in the choice of prayer as well (my emphases).

> Here, for the first time, I have seen sh'lihei tsibbur free to **choose** which prayers they wish to recite… The *matbei'a shel t'fillah* remains, but **piyyutim**… of all kinds may be spontaneously selected by the sh'li'ah tsibbur. Sometimes, he may introduce an old prayer not found in modern siddurim, but which may exist in *kitbei yad* (manuscripts).[85]

Nehamot in Various Rites

Nehamot frequently appear in clusters, to intensify the consolation they bring. Thus, the Aramaic phrase *Zayin d'-Nehemta*, "Seven Consolatory" Haftarot read on the seven Shabbatot that follow the fast of Tishah B'Av, ninth day of the midsummer month of Av. The first of those consolatory Haftarot, in fact, begins (my emphases)

> ***Nahamu, nahamu*** *ami, yomar Eloheikhem*
>
> "**Take Comfort**, My people," says your God (Isaiah 40: 1).

Solomon Mandelkern cites that phrase and 36 other biblical Nehamot in which God either promises future reconciliation or has become reconciled with humans' frailty, if they repent and offer prayers of supplication.[86] This is rendered most often by the verb *N-H-M* in its various declensions: *nihham*; *hinaheim*; *m'naheim*; *t'nuham*; *hitnaheim*, etc.

The verb *N-H-M* figures prominently in the Golden Calf incident (Exodus 32: 1-6), when God resolves to utterly destroy the people (verse 10). Moses implores God (verse 12; my emphases):

> *shuv mei-haron apekha* ***v'-hinaheim*** *al ha-ra'ah l'-amekha*
>
> turn from Your fierce wrath and **repent**[87] of the evil against Your people.

God does repent of the evil He planned to do to His people (verse 14; my emphasis)—

> ***Va-yinaheim*** *Adonai al hara'ah asher diber la'asot l'-amo—*

but not enough to defer the punishment that swiftly ensues; 3,000 are slain by the Levites, in God's name (verses 27-28).

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85 Laurence D. Loeb, "Hazzanut in Iran," *Journal of Synagogue Music*, Vol. I, No. 3, January 1968: 5.

86 Solomon Mandelkern, ed. *Konkordentsiyah La-Tanakh* (Jerusalem: Schoken), 1967: 737-738.

87 The past-perfect *hitpa'eil* form, yet another possible meaning of the verb *N-H-M*.

Why did Moses' plea and repentance not stay God's wrath? Because the plea and repentance *were not preceded by the people's confession*; so says the Midrash.[88] It was God—atop the mountain—Who pointed out to Moses what Israel had done (verses 7-8).

> *Lekh reid ki shiḥeit amkha…*
> Hurry down, for your people… have made themselves a golden calf and bowed low to it and sacrificed to it, saying: "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt."

True, Moses had offered a T'ḥinnah on the people's behalf in verses 11-13. Yet, because there had been no Viddui on the people's part, they did not merit the consolation of a Neḥamah. Since it was God Who "confessed" the people's sin, it was God Who "reconciled" Himself to the punishment that followed. What better precedent for the anonymous liturgist who first positioned this verse after Viddui and T'ḥinnah, to remind God that just as He sought Neḥamah after biblical Israel sinned, so do the descendants of those Israelites now seek reconciliation with Him when they transgress.

Since Neḥamot quite often consist of only a single verse or phrase, they are hardest to document as the concluding genre of Seder S'liḥah subdivisions. Still, there was a long- standing popular tradition to conclude non-obligatory supplications with what Joseph Heinemann calls a "eulogy formula" like the one mentioned in Rav Amram's *Seder* (page 260): "O forgiving God."[89] Admittedly, the halakhah normally prohibited using this type of wording or creating new b'rakhot in general, but such circumscription never applied to Neḥamot. Example: the 10th-century *Siddur* of Rav Saadya Gaon[90] adds this subscription to its Seder S'liḥah:

> *Ki al raḥamekha ha-rabbim anu v'tuḥim*
> For we are confident of Your great mercy.

Even the anti-rabbinical Karaite tradition, which traces its roots back to the 9th-century Babylonian exilarch, Anan ben David, follows universal Jewish practice in concluding its Seder S'liḥah with words of consolation and comfort. In keeping with Karaite belief that Hebrew Scripture or Mikra[91]—from the verb *K-R-A*, "to read"—should be our sole source of religious practice

88 *Midrash Tanḥuma* on Ki Tissa; *Sh'mot Rabba*, 42-43.
89 Joseph Heinemann. *Prayer in the Talmud* (Berlin: De Gruyter), 1977: 177.
90 Davidson et al, *Siddur Rav Saadya Gaon*, 1978.
91 Weinberger, *Romaniote Penitential Poetry*, 1980: 3; 165-181.

(the name "Karaites" could just as easily have been "Mikra-ites"), every unit of their s'lihot prayers ends with the reading of an optimistic passage from Mikra. The s'lihah genre that Karaites call **K'ri'ah** ("reading")—parallels what rabbinical tradition calls **Nehamah**.

The natural place of Nehamah at the completion of s'lihah units is also confirmed by an anthology that groups into subdivisions every genre of penitential poems sung by Jews living in formerly Byzantine regions surrounding the Mediterranean.[92] These include the Balkans, present-day Greece, Asia Minor, Constantinople, Syria, Israel and Egypt. The minhag of these regions, called Romaniote, developed sometime after the fourth century.[93] Romaniote piyyutim fall under four sequential headings that can be reduced to three genres according to their liturgical function:

P'tihah (Hakdamah / P'sukei D'-Rahamei);

Viddui;

T'hinnah (Tahanun / Litaniyah / S'lihah).

The Romaniote headings P'tihah, Hakdamah and P'sukei D'-Rahamei are used interchangeably for introductory s'lihot.[94] The headings Tehinnah, Tahanun, Litaniyah and S'lihah are used interchangeably for supplications.[95] Viddui always appears after P'tihah / Hakdamah / P'sukei D'-Rahamei (with an extra P'sukei D'-Rahamei often added after the Viddui)[96] and before T'hinnah / Tahanun / Litaniyah / S'lihah (with yet another P'sukei D'-Rahamei possibly being added afterwards).[97]

If Nehamah seems to be missing from this schematic, it is "missing" only as a formal heading, but implicitly present in a paragraph of instructions appended to the Romaniote Seider S'lihah. The instructions, referring to *Seder Rav Amram Gaon*,[98] give only the opening words and biblical sources for several selections that are unmistakably Nehamot in tone and function. Here are a few of the indicated verses from Tanakh.[99]

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92 Andrew Sharf, s.v. "Byzantine Empire," *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 1972, Vol. 4: 1551.

93 Weinberger, *Romaniote Penitential Poetry*, 1980: 4-6.

94 Ibid. pages 6-7.

95 Ibid. pages 10-11.

96 Ibid. page 12.

97 Ibid. page 17.

98 Ibid. page 18, designated as *SRA"G*.

99 Idem, Psalms 20: 2, 3, 10; First Kings 8: 57, 59.

Ya'ankha Adonai b'-yom tsarah… yishlah ezr'kha mi-kodesh
God will answer you in the day of trouble…
He will send your help from the Holy Place

Adonai hoshi'ah; ha-Melekh ya'aneinu v'-yom kor'einu
God will indeed save us; the King will hear us when we call

Y'-hi Adonai Eloheinu imanu ka'asher hayah im avoteinu
The Lord our God will be with us as He was with our forebears

V'-yi-h'yu d'varai eileh asher hit-hananti… k'rovim el Adonai
Let these, my pleading words... be ever near to God

At the very end of a Seder S'lihah according to the Greek minhag, there appear several anonymously authored piyyutistic Nehamot written in a similar vein.[100]

Ti-nahami v'-tomri, anokhi mariti
Be comforted, even as you acknowledge your disobedience

v'-eit hish li-g'ulah, y'shu'ateinu v'-ezrateinu selah
for it is time to hasten redemption, our help and salvation forever.

Sh'lomo l'-amo yifdeh b'li mikhlom,
Y'-vareikh et amo v'-shalom
God will deliver his people without shame,
And bless them with peace.

Unfortunately, Jewish history has witnessed enough suffering to fill entire libraries with s'lihot. Many poems lamenting tragic events remained in S'lihot services of the various minhagim into modern times, augmenting an already overflowing roster of penitential genres that cover the gamut of categories enumerated earlier (see notes 41-55). This virtually un-navigable surplus has prompted the editors of S'lihot anthologies in recent centuries to provide

100 Ibid. pages 165, 166, 181.

subheadings of better-known genres—but never of Nehamot—a puzzling omission, in view of their ubiquity.

North African communities' mahzorim name the final pages of their S'lihot service *P'sukei Ritsui S'lihah D'-N'hemta* (Verses invoking divine acceptance of consoling forgiveness prayers).[101] Middle Eastern Sephardic rites head their concluding subsection *P'sukei D'-Rahamei* (Verses Invoking God's Mercy),[102] a title that can prove confusing since the Franco-German *Mahzor Vitry* from the 12th century uses that title for its opening P'tihot as well. If no heading appears for Nehamot, we must rely on content, as in the case of Romaniote, where the import of its S'lihot anthology's concluding verses speaks louder than any heading.

The 19th-century rite of Livorno[103] ends its Seder S'lihah with a biblical verse that readers of this essay will by now recognize (Leviticus 16: 30).

> *Ki va-yom ha-zeh y'-khaper aleikhem l'-taher et-khem mi-kol hatoteikhem*
>
> For on this day will God grant atonement to cleanse you from all your sins.

The current Italian mahzor[104] ends Seider S'lihah by paraphrasing Psalms 25: 11.

> *L'-ma'an shimkha, Adonai, v'-salahta la-avoneinu ki rav hu*
>
> For Your name's sake, Adonai, You will surely forgive our many sins.

An earlier mahzor of post-Renaissance Italian Jewry closed its S'lihot identically.[105] So does a still-used mahzor of the Ashkenazic Dutch community from the 18th century.[106] The verse from Psalms cited by all these rites addresses God in the second person singular and uses the imperative form. It is spoken with the familiar tone of self-confidence before God that permeates the private s'lihot prayers of sages in the Talmud[107]—the telltale sign of a Nehamah.

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101 *Seder Siftei R'nanot* (Tripoli: n. p.), 1925: 43.

102 Yaakov Levi, ed., *Seder Ha-S'lihot K'-fi Minhagei Ha-Sefardim* (Jerusalem: Yad HaRav Nisim), 1995: 40.

103 F. Consolo, *Libro dei canti d'Israele—Ebrei Spagnoli* (Florence), 1892.

104 Hartoum, *Mahzor Minhag Italyani*, 1988: 970.

105 Samuel David Luzzato. *Mahzor Italyani* (Livorno, 1855, itself an update of *Mahzor Bologna*, 1545): 76.

106 Shalom Katz, ed., *Seder S'lihot Kol HaShanah* (Amsterdam: reprint of 1712 edition), 1994: 103.

107 Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud*, 1977: 190.

A comparable optimism characterized the 19th-century South German minhag whose s'lihah subdivisions ended with a Nehamah that is just short of triumphalist. In an article on that tradition, Geoffrey Goldberg writes of Maier Levi (1813-1874), a teacher in the Jewish High School of Esslingen, near Stuttgart, who "bequeathed to us one of the most important documents… emanating from the period of the Emancipation."[108] In a graceful hand-written script, Levi transcribed the words and prevalent chants for a typical s'lihot subdivision of Musaf L'-Yom Kippur (identical to what would be recited in Ma'ariv, where Levi omits Seder S'lihah altogether). Its Nehamah opens with *Al tavo v'-mishpat aleinu* ("Do not pass judgement upon us") and closes with a verse from Psalms (20: 10),

> *Adonai hoshi'a, ha-Melech ya'-aneinu v'-yom kor'einu*
>
> God will save! The King will answer us on the day of our calling.[109]

The current mahzor of Jews from North Africa,[110] as well as Saadyah Gaon's *Siddur* that reflected Sephardic synagogue worship in the early-10th century,[111] close their S'lihot sections with another biblical verse bearing assurance of prayer acceptance on High (Exodus 33: 19).

> *Va-yomer, Ani a'avir kol tuvi al panekha, v'-karati v'-sheim Adonai l'-fanekha, v'-hanoti et asher a-hon, v'-rihamti et asher a-raheim*
>
> And [God] said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim before you the name Adonai and the grace that I grant and the compassion that I show."

Contemporary American Sephardim conclude Seder S'lihah on Kol Nidre night with a biblical Nehamah from Micah (7: 18-20).[112] Orthodox Ashkenazim

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108 Geoffrey Goldberg. "The Cantorial *Fantasia* Revisited: New Perspectives on an Ashkenazic Musical Genre," *Musica Judaica*, Vol. XVII (New York: The American Society for Jewish Music), 2003-2004: 36.

109 *The Compendium of Maier Levi of Esslingen—Musaf L'-Yom Kippur* (Philadelphia: The Eric Mandell Music Collection at Gratz College). On a 2005 visit I found only six uncatalogued volumes of handwritten musical notation with passages pasted in from the *Roedelheim Mahzor* edited by Wolf Heidenheim, ca. 1840. A decade and a half before, Goldberg had discovered eight volumes in the collection.

110 Yaakov Levi, ed., *Seder S'lihot K'-Minhag Kehillot Yisrael Sheb'-Tsafon Afrikah* (Jerusalem: n. p.), 1995: 36.

111 Davidson et al, *Siddur Rav Saadyah Gaon*, 1978: 305.

112 De Sola Pool, *T'fillot L'-Yom Kippur*, 1974: 59-60.

in the United States quote the same two verses, but at the end of S'lihot in the Musaf service of Yom Kippur day.[113]

> *Mi Eil kamokha, nosei avon v'-oveir al pesha li-sh'eirit nahalato… ti-tein emet l'-Ya'akov, hesed l'-Avraham, asher nishbata la-Avoteinu mi-mei kedem*
>
> Who is like You, forgiving iniquity and remitting transgression by the remnant of Your people, You will keep faith with Jacob and show to Abraham the loyalty You promised our ancestors from ancient times.

An undated compendium of Ashkenazic s'lihot, possibly from the early-20th century, includes a sample unit for Yom Kippur Eve,[114] which ends with the Nehamah

> *Ki atah, Adonai, tov v'-salah l'-khol kor'ekha*
>
> For You, Adonai, are good and forgiving to all who call upon You.

ArtScroll Siddur,[115] much preferred among synagogue-going American Jews for its copious (if unabashedly Fundamentalist) footnotes, gives the following Nehamah for the opening subdivision of a Seder S'lihah recited on weekday fasts after the Amidah:

> *K'-raheim av al banim... Adonai Hoshi'ah,*
>
> *ha-Melekh ya'aneinu v'-yom kor'einu*
>
> As a father pities his children… God will save,
>
> the King will answer us on the day when we call.

In sum: all rites, whether Ashkenazic, Sephardic or innumerable shades in between, offer words of comfort and reconciliation with God after every communal recitation of a Seder S'lihah.

Birkat HaMazon—the Grace after Meals[116]—does likewise, amidst a series of petitions for our personal, communal and national welfare. May the Merciful One: sustain us in honor; break our yoke of oppression; lead us to our land, etc. These are all what we might think of as T'hinnah-equivalents. Then comes a petition with the identical invocation—but with a request for Nehamah (my emphases).

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113 Scherman, *ArtScroll Mahzor for Yom Kippur*, 1986: 608.

114 *S'lihot Im Peirushim Yafim M'lukatim U-M'sudarim K'-Fi Seider U-Minhag B'nei K"K Ha-Ashkenazim, Yishm'reim Ha-Eil* (Venice: Z. Bragdin), n. d.: 37b.

115 *ArtScroll Siddur*, pp. 816-820.

116 Ibid. pages 192-193.

HaRaḥaman hu yishlaḥ lanu et Eiliyahu ha-Navi…

vi-vaser lanu b'sorot tovot, y'shu'ot ***v'-neḥamot***

May the Merciful One send the Elijah the Prophet…

to bring us good tidings, salvation **and consolation**.

A similar need for divine comfort was apparently felt by the unknown liturgist who inserted into *Birkat HaMazon b'-Veit ha-Eivel*, Grace after Meals that is recited in a house of mourning, a paragraph that begins and ends with Neḥamot (my emphases): [117]

Naḥeim*, Adonai Eloheinu, et aveilei Tsiyon…*

Comfort, O god, all who mourn Zion…

Barukh Atah… ***m'-Naheim*** *Tsiyon u-Voneh Yerushalayim*

Blessed are You… Who **comforts** Zion and rebuilds Jerusalem.

An almost identical paragraph appears in the Minḥah Amidah for Tish'ah B'Av,[118] asking comfort for all Israel over the destruction of both Temples and the wanton loss of innumerable Jewish lives during the intervening centuries since then, on that date.

A shaft of consoling light penetrates even the gloom of *Megillat Eikhka*, the Book of Lamentations that is chanted on Tish'ah B'Av. This occurs at the 21st verse of the third of *Eikhah*'s five chapters, a turning from the depths of despair to the beginning of consolation (my emphases).

(Continuing despair) Verse 20.	*Zakhor tizkor* ***v'-tashu'akh alai nafshi*** *When thinking of my misery,* **I was bowed low**.
(Beginning of consolation) Verse 21.	*Zot ashuv el libi; al kein* ***o-ḥil*** *But, still I recall it, therefore* **I have hope**.

The remaining two and-a-third chapters of Lamentations pick up this comforting theme in several key phrases:

"Fear not";

"God, You have pleaded my cause";

"O Daughter of Zion, Edom will no longer carry you away into captivity";

117 Ibid. pages 198-199.

118 Ibid. pages 240-241.

> "Turn us unto You, O God, and we shall return, renew our days as of old!"[119]

If the comforting dawn could break over ancient Judah's abandoned hills even on the Black Fast of Tishah B'Av, our modern argument (as we shall discover in the next subsection) is that we should expect no less in today's packed synagogues as the White Fast of Yom Kippur commences with a disavowal of all personal vows that we may have made to God, and inadvertently broken.

Finally—still under the heading of Nehamot in various Rites—there is the Talmud's dictum (BT *B'rakhot* 31 a-b) that Hannah's prayer in First Samuel 2: 1-10 affords us a model to govern the structure of prayer in all its forms. Open with praise of God, continue with personal petition, and close with praise of God.

In the case of s'lihot, which are petitionary by definition (i. e., asking forgiveness), the opening and closing praise-sections are replaced by confession and consolation; central petitioning remains the constant element in all categories of prayer. To omit introductory confession would be to disrespect the One at Whom our petition for absolution is directed. To omit the concluding consolation would be to ignore God's promise that our plea will not go unheard ("Before they call, I will answer"; Isaiah 65: 24).

Kol Nidre—a Prototypical S'lihah Subdivision

Among the most beloved of all prayers, Kol Nidre—accompanied by a coterie of s'lihah genres—appears at the very beginning of the service. An opening unit unto itself, it stands apart from the complete Seder S'lihah[120] because the Ma'ariv service happens to intervene on that special evening. Nonetheless, it serves the function of an opening *subdivision*, prefiguring every s'lihah subdivision that will follow after the Silent Amidah (my emphases).

The unit's **P'tihah** is

Or Zaru'a La-Tzaddik	Light is sown for the Righteous; Psalm 95: 11.[121]

119 Lamentations 3: 57-58, 4: 21-22, 5: 21.

120 Bacher et al, *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1905, s.v. "Selichah."

121 Based on a midrash on Ps. 27 (*Adonai Ori v'-yish'i*) which teaches: this is the Light of Creation that has stood ready for the righteous since the beginning of time, awaiting the final atonement at the end of days.

Its two **Vidduyim** are

Bi-Y'shivah Shel Maalah...
L'-hitpalleil im ha-avaryanim
Kol Nidre ve-esarei ...

... We declare it permissible to pray

All vows, prohibitions... [i.e., all self-assumed obligations]...

Kul'hon iharatna v'-hon

we regret and hereby retract.

Its **T'hinnah** begins just past the halfway point of Kol Nidre as the text shifts from confession to supplication with the plea

Kul'hon y'-hon sharan

Let all our unattainable vows to God be considered null and void.

Sephardic practice makes this transition from Viddui to T'hinnah crystal clear by assigning the final portion of Kol Nidre to the congregation:

v'ha-kahal onin

And the worshipers answer aloud :[122]

Kul'hon y'-hon sharan,
sh'vikin sh'vitin...
nidrana la nidrei...

May they all be undone,
repealed, cancelled...
Our vows shall not be considered vows...

u-sh'vu'atana
la sh'vu'ot.

and our promises
shall not be considered promises.

Its **Nehamot** include ***V'-Nislah...***
S'lah Na...
Va-yomer Adonai
Salahti ki-D'varekha

All the people were forgiven...
May it please You to **pardon us**...
And God said:
I have forgiven, as you have requested
(which, in the *Siddur* of Rav Saadya Gaon,[123] is intoned by the entire kahal in response to the hazzan's call).

Barukh Atah...
She-Heheyanu...

Blessed are You...
Who has kept us in life.

122 De Sola Pool, *T'fillot L'-Yom Kippur*, p. 26.
123 Davidson et al, 1978: 306.

With the above prototypical S'lihah unit as a template, I have charted eight subdivisions (including this one, anchored by Kol Nidre,) that comprise every s'lihah traditionally recited in the S'lihot section of Ma'ariv proper on Yom Kippur Eve **(**see **Appendix A)**.

The Importance of Identifying S'lihot Subdivisions

By categorizing individual s'lihot according to their poetic form (see notes 60-62) rather than by their content and liturgical function, we weaken both the structure and our ability to comprehend the underlying logic of universally recited S'lihot groupings.[124]

Yom Kippur Eve's liturgy offers a parade example; it presents an unusual challenge by opening with the Kol Nidre unit, a liturgical moment that is impossible to surpass! The solution: treat the isolated s'lihah subdivision in which Kol Nidre occurs—in as matter-of-fact a manner as possible; the high drama already built into it needs no histrionics.

Nor is bolstering required by the annual appeal for Israel / Federation / Synagogue Building Fund, which comes well within a prime time of congregational attentiveness that should last through the end of the Amidah.[125] This self-motivating phase ends as people seat themselves when they have finished praying silently, without fanfare or external assistance.

But now the seams in worship begin to show. If the sermon fails to re-ignite people's devotional fire and transpose them from listeners into participators without delay, those seams will surely widen and cause some rough going for the duration of the service. Generally beginning in reverential silence, the sermon would do well to conclude by meshing imperceptibly with what comes next: the S'lihot section's opening—a humble nighttime plea—*Ya'aleh*:[126]

> Let our prayer rise up at evening;
>
> Our petition reach You at dawning,
>
> Our salvation arrive with the sunset.

If this first P'tihah of Seider S'lihot takes off as scheduled, the congregation's sense of devotion will sustain itself through all the subdivisions that follow.

The key to treating s'lihah subdivisions on Yom Kippur or any other fast lies in taking our cue from the textual changes they offer at any given point

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124 Kieval, *The High Holy Days*, p. 239.

125 *ArtScroll Mahzor for Yom Kippur*, pp. 138-142.

126 Ibid. p. 102.

in the journey. We need not improvise; the path has been well laid out for us by generations past. Should we decide to add more recent texts for the sake of relevance, or to substitute piyyutim from other rites in order to be more inclusive, we need to make certain that what we're stitching on to the liturgy matches its whole cloth. Repairing the world—or the Order of Prayer—can cause more problems than it solves, if our repair is not truly "invisible." Just as a tailor would not knowingly replace a sleeve with a trouser leg, so too, ought we not attempt to slip a philosophical treatise into a confessional slot, or a meditation on the existential nature of existence into a series of communally sung Nehamot that the usage of centuries has given us.

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Appendix A—Subdivisions of *Seder S'lihah* on Yom Kippur Eve—-based on *ArtScroll Mahzor*, 1986

Subdivision:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
(P'tihah)	1.Or Zaru'a La-Tzaddik	1.Ya'aleh Tahanunei-nu 2.Shomei-a T'fillah	1.Hatei, Elohai	1. Hatei, Elohai	1.Ki Hinei KaHomer	1.Z'khor Rahame-kha	1.Eloheinu…S'lah	1.Atah Yodei'a Razei Olam
Viddui	1. Bi-Y'shivah Shel Ma'alah… l'-Hitpalleil im Ha-Avaryanim 2.Kol Nidre… kul'hon iharat-na v'-hon;	1.Ha-N'shamah Lakh… V'-salaht a la-avoneinu	1.S'lah Na Ashamot	1.Omnam Kein		1.Al Na Tasheit… hatanu 2.Hein Ya'avir… hatanu 3. Z'khor Lanu B'rit… M'hei F'sha'einu… Halbein Hata'einu… Kapeir Hata'einu	1.Anu Azei Fanim 2.Ana Tavo…aval anahnu hatanu 3.Ashamnu 4.Sarnu 5.Hirshanu	1.Al Heit (3X)

Subdivi-sion:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
T'hinnah		1. Dark'kha 2. L'ma'ankha 3. Ta'aleh Arukha 4. Eil Erekh Apayim… va-yikra —OR— 4. Eil Melekh Yo-sheiv… Va-yikra: 5.Adonai, Ado-nai… v'-nakei	1. Eil Melekh Yosheiv… va-yikra: 2. Adonai, Adonai… v'-nakei	1 .Eil Melekh Yosheiv… va-yikra: 2. Adonai, Adonai… v'-nakei	1. Eil Melekh Yosheiv… va-yikra: 2. Adonai, Adonai… v'-nakei	1. Sh'ma Koleinu	1. S'lah U-M'hal 2. Haz'do- -not 3.Mah Nomar	1. V'-Al Kulam (3 X)

Appendix A—Subdivisions of *Seder S'lihah* on Yom Kippur Eve—57 on *ArtScroll Mahzor*, 1986

Subdivision:	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
Nehamah	1.V'-Nislah 2.S'lah Na 3.Va-Yomer Adonai: Salahti 4.Barukh … She-Hehe-yanu	1.V'-Salahta La-Avoneinu 2.Ha'azinah… v'-salahta 3.K'-Ra-heim…ha-Me-lekh Ya'aneinu 4.S'lah Na 5.Va-Yomer Adonai: Salahti	1.V'-Salahta La-Avoneinu 2.Al Tavo… Shimkha… Ya-amod lanu 3.K'-Raheim… ha-Melekh ya'aneinu 4.S'lah Na 5.VaYomer Adonai: Salahti	1.V'-Sa-lahta La-Avoneinu	1.V'-Sa-lahta La-Avoneinu	1.Aseh Imanu… v'-nihamtanu… Atah ta'aneh 2.Al Ta-Az-veinuu… v'-tislah la-avoneinu	1.Shimkha Mei-Olam… timheh f'sha'ei-nu…	1.V'-Atah Rahum… m'kabeil shavim 2.V'-David… a-taheir et-khem 3.Mikha… yikhbosh avonoteinu 4. Dani'eil… shimkha nikra…al amekha 5.Ezra… v'-lo azavtam 6. …Amkha…la-Adonai ha-rahamim v'-has'lihot… 7.Eil Rahum…banu nikra sh'mekha 8.Aneinu…Solei'ah u-moheil 9.Mi She-Ana…Hu Ya'aneinu 10.Rahamana D'-Anei La-Aniyei, Aneina

The Liturgy of Yom Kippur and Rosh HaShanah—Similarities and Differences

by Hayyim Herman Kieval

Yom Ha-Kippurim is first mentioned in Leviticus 23: 27 as a Day of Atonement to be observed each year "on the tenth day of the seventh month." This name has persisted unchanged to the present day, side by side with the popular designations—Yom Kippur or simply Kippur—this despite the fact that the nature of the day's observance has undergone a thorough transformation from the largely cultic rituals depicted in Leviticus, Chapter 16. On the other hand, this chapter has been retained unchanged as the text of the Torah portion read in the Synagogue for the morning service of Yom Kippur, whereas the original Torah readings for the other festivals, as listed in the Mishnah,[1] have all undergone changes. Investigation of the origins of *Yom Ha-Kippurim* and its historical relationship to "the first day of the seventh month" (Leviticus 23: 24), as well as to the festival of Sukkot, beginning on the l5th day of that month (ibid., v. 34), lies outside the scope of this study.[2]

Our special interest here is in the process of development by which the theological ideas underlying Yom Kippur and Rosh HaShanah and, in particular, the expression of these ideas in their respective liturgies, came to be associated with one another. Nevertheless, it is pertinent here to cite the paradox that the only time the name "Rosh HaShanah" is mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures (Ezekiel 40: 1), it is identified not with the first day of the seventh

1 Mishnah *Megillah* 3: 5. Cf. Tosefta *Megillah* 3(4): 5-8, ed. Lieberman, pp. 354-355.

2 For discussion of this question, see Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel*, translated and abridged by Moshe Greenberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), pp. 305-309; p. 210, n. 17. See also M. H. Segal, "The Religion of Israel Before Sinai—Part II", *JQR, LIII* (January 1963), pp. 240-255. See also Julian B. Morgenstern, "The Three Calendars of Ancient Israel", "Additional Notes", and "Supplementary Studies", *HUCA*, 1924, 1926, 1935; "Two Prophecies of the Fourth Century B.C. and the Evolution of Yom Kippur", *HUCA, XXIV* (1952-53), pp. 1-74. See also Norman H. Snaith, *The Jewish New Year Festival* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1947), pp. 131-141. For more popular presentations, see Theodor H. Gaster, *Festivals of the Jewish Year* (New York: William Sloane Associates, 1953), chapters 7, 8; and Hayyim Schauss, *The Jewish Festivals* (Cincinnati: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1938), chapters 13-17.

month, but with the tenth day! Yom Kippur was clearly associated with the New Year festival. In this connection, it is of interest to note that the Jubilee year began officially on Yom Kippur rather than on the first of the seventh month (Leviticus 25: 9). The original Hebrew name of this month was *yeraḥ ha-etanim* (I Kings 8: 2). *Yeraḥ* indicates the lunar month, but the meaning of *etanim* is unclear.[3] Following the return from the Babylonian exile, as the Talmud reports,[4] the old Hebrew names were replaced by Babylonian terminology and the seventh month was henceforth called *Tishre* (or *Tishri*).

In spite of the puzzling problems raised by the multiple calendars of ancient Israel, the evolution of Yom Kippur is still far less obscure than that of Rosh HaShanah. As we have noted above, the latter is not even referred to by that name in the entire Hebrew Bible. Only in the Second Commonwealth period did "the first day of the seventh month" become the undisputed New Year festival (although other lesser "new years" persisted[5]) and was henceforth called "Rosh HaShanah." What the specific nature of this day was in the early Biblical period and how it was observed in detail are still unanswered questions. It was, of course, a New Moon (*Rosh Ḥodesh*), but undoubtedly a special New Moon by virtue of its being the seventh—like the seventh day, seventh year, and seven cycles of years. The Torah describes it only as "a complete rest, a sacred occasion commemorated with loud blasts", *shabbaton zikhron teru'ah mikra kodesh* (Leviticus 23: 24), or simply as *yom teru'ah*, "a day when the horn is sounded" (Numbers 29: 1). Even the familiar association of Rosh HaShanah with the ram's horn (shofar) as the type of instrument on which the prescribed blasts are to be sounded, is nowhere to be found in the Torah.[6]

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3 The Bible associates *etan* with the word *naḥal* (Deuteronomy 21: 4; Amos 5: 24) to designate a watered *wadi*, i.e., a valley with a perennial brook. Thus, *etan* signifies permanent, enduring, mighty. See Brown, Driver and Briggs, *A Hebrew Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), s.v. *etan*, pp. 450-451. For this reason, the Midrash interprets *etanim* to refer to the Patriarchs, the "mighty ones" of Israel; a favorite synonym for Abraham in the *Piyyut* literature is *etan*. The seventh month is called *yeraḥ ha-etanim* (I Kings 8: 2), according to the Midrash, because of a legend that the Patriarchs were born and died in that month. The folklorist, Yom-Tov Lewinsky, prefers to associate *etan* with streams of water: the seventh month, *Etanim*, is so called because of a number of water ceremonials which have characterized it from the earliest times.

4 Yerushalmi *Rosh HaShanah* 1: 2, fol. 56d. Cf. *Genesis Rabbah* 48: 9, ed. Theodor-Albeck, p. 485.

5 Mishnah *Rosh HaShanah* 1: 1; Tosefta *Rosh HaShanah* 1: 1 ff.

6 [For various explanations as to why the shofar is sounded on Rosh HaShanah, see D. Golinkin, "The Satan and R. Yizhak Revisited", *Conservative Judaism* 3: 5/3

Ironically, in their effort to find a halakhic justification in Scripture for the use of the Shofar on the New Year, the Sages had to resort to the analogy of the sounding of the Shofar on Yom Kippur—to signal the start of the Jubilee year (Leviticus 25: 9).[7]

The Biblical Roots of the Yom Kippur Liturgy

By contrast with Rosh HaShanah, *Yom Ha-Kippurim*, as we have seen, is specifically named as such in the Torah. Its character as a twenty-four hour fast, marked by refraining from all forms of labor and by abstinence from normal bodily pleasures, is clearly established in this ancient description: "It shall be a sacred occasion for you; you shall practice self-denial—you shall do no work throughout that day. For it is a Day of Atonement, on which expiation is made on your behalf before the Lord your God; on the ninth day of the month, from evening to evening, you shall observe this, your Sabbath" (Leviticus 23: 27, 28, 32).[8]

The Torah, furthermore, gives us considerable information about the manner in which worship was conducted on Yom Kippur in Biblical times. The 16th chapter of Leviticus contains an elaborate description of the cultic rituals of purgation and atonement: for the Sanctuary proper; for the High Priest and his household; for his fellow-priests, the family of Aaron; and for "the whole congregation of Israel". Upon these rites were based the impressive ceremonies of the Day of Atonement later conducted by the High Priest in the Temple of Jerusalem. These rites, as performed during the period of the Second Commonwealth, are recorded in elaborate detail in rabbinic literature. In the Mishnah, the Tosefta, and the Talmuds of both Palestine and Babylonia, the tractate *Yoma* is almost exclusively devoted to a description and interpretation of these sacerdotal rites.

The Avodah section of the traditional Yom Kippur worship service to this day constitutes a symbolic dramatization of these ceremonies, a reverent recollection in the Synagogue liturgy of a rite that had become obsolete with

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(Spring 1982), pp. 50-54 and Kieval, pp. 115 ff.]

7 *Rosh HaShanah* 27b. For the Karaite rejection of the Talmudic analogy, see Kieval, p. 213, n. 14. The Karaites call the 1st of Tishre *Yom Teru'ah*. The Karaite, Daniel ben Moses al Kumisi (ca. 900 C.E.), insisted that Rosh HaShanah should be observed on the 10th of *Tishre* and not on the 1st. See Snaith, *The Jewish New Year Festival* (above, n. 2), p. 139 and cf. P. Selvin Goldberg, *Karaite Liturgy and Its Relation to Synagogue Worship* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1957), pp. 115-119.

8 Unless otherwise noted, all translations of Pentateuchal passages are from the 1962 edition of *The Torah* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society).

the destruction of the Temple. Even in this early cultic stage, however, some of the elements of the later Yom Kippur prayer service in the Synagogue were already present. The High Priest read two passages (Leviticus 16: 1-34 and 23: 26-32) from the Torah scroll and recited another passage (Numbers 29: 7-11) from memory. These are virtually the same passages read to this day on Yom Kippur morning from the two scrolls in the traditional Synagogue.[9] The High Priest accompanied his scriptural recitation with a series of eight *berakhot*; only their names and brief formulas of prayer are recorded in the Mishnah and Talmud,[10] but their influence is perceived in the Synagogue liturgy for Yom Kippur.[11] Most important for the development of the Yom Kippur liturgy, the High Priest offered three prayers of confession, which the Mishnah records—along with the response of the attendant priests and congregation.[12] These confessions are still quoted, verbatim, together with other passages from the Mishnah, in the Avodah section of the Yom Kippur Musaf service. Furthermore, the confessional of the High Priest influenced the language of the prayers of confession, which entered the Synagogue liturgy for the Day of Atonement, and other fast days.

Theological and Liturgical Links between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur

If the Torah is explicit in its description of the worship of the tenth day, *Yom Ha-Kippurim*, it is silent about any connection between it and the first day of the seventh month, aside from their calendrical proximity and similar sacrificial offerings (Numbers 29: 1-11). This reticence is remarkable in view of the fact that, throughout Talmudic literature—and especially in the liturgy of the Synagogue—Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur are represented as integral parts of one whole. Just how this nexus was established remains something of a mystery. We know that during the Second Commonwealth, the evolution of the festival designated in the Pentateuch as *Yom Teru'ah* and *Shabbaton Zikhron Teru'ah* into Rosh HaShanah was completed. In Tannaitic literature,

9 Mishnah *Yoma* 7: l. The passage *Akh be-asor* (Leviticus 23: 26-32) is omitted from the synagogue service on Yom Kippur morning. The Italian Rite adds Leviticus 17.

10 Mishnah *Yoma* 7: 1; Yoma 68b and 70a; Yerushalmi *Yoma* 8: 1, fol. 44b. Cf. Mishnah *Sotah* 7: 7; Sotah 41a; Yerushalmi *Sotah* 7: 6, fol. 22a. The Yerushalmi passages give the fuller wording.

11 This influence is specifically seen in the *Kedushat Ha-Yom* benediction of the Amidah.

12 Mishnah *Yoma* 3: 8; 4: 2; 6: 2.

the Rosh HaShanah festival is already so deeply rooted that no need is felt to explain the origin of this new name. The tractate of that name in the Mishnah and cognate literature simply assumes the New Year function of the day.

Furthermore, by the Tannaitic period, a theological—and thus also a liturgical—relationship between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur is well-established; the prayers for the two festivals are referred to, in both Tannaitic and Amoraic sources, as sharing a number of characteristics. For example, the Tosefta states: "these are the *berakhot* which are recited at length, the *berakhot* of public fast days, and the *berakhot* of Rosh HaShanah, and the *berakhot* of *Yom Ha-Kippurim*."[13] The Babylonian Talmud (*Berakhot* 12b) specifies two variations in *berakhot* of the Amidah for the ten-day period from Rosh HaShanah through Yom Kippur; one of them, *ha-melekh ha-kadosh* (in place of the customary *ha-el ha-kadosh*) affects the text of the Amidah on both festivals equally. By the time of the post-Talmudic tractate *Soferim*, the liturgy for the two festivals was so closely associated that it was possible to state: "Just as the *ḥatimah* (closing benediction) of Rosh HaShanah and *Yom Ha-Kippurim* differs from the other festivals, so does their *tefillah*."[14]

The liturgical similarities reflect, as is to be expected, the theological ideas, which came to characterize both festivals. By the Tannaitic period, Rosh HaShanah had already assumed the solemn character of the day of judgement (*din*).[15] Possibly, this development rose by association with the Day of Atonement; the Tanna, Rabbi Meir, stated: "Everyone is judged on Rosh HaShanah while the decree is sealed on *Yom Ha-Kippurim*."[16] In Talmudic literature and in all sources deriving from it, Rosh HaShanah is invariably thought of as the forerunner of Yom Kippur, and the latter as the climax of the penitential season inaugurated by the former. The two are inextricably linked as twin festivals of judgement, repentance and atonement. Naḥmanides gave a classic formulation to their theological relationship (in his commentary on Leviticus 23: 24): "Rosh HaShanah is the Day of Judgment with Mercy (*yom*

13 Tosefta *Berakhot* 1: 6, ed. Lieberman, p. 3, and the notes to line 32 ibid.

14 *Soferim* 19: 6, ed. Higger, p. 328 and Introduction, p. 54.

15 See Mishnah *Rosh HaShanah* 1: 2 and *Rosh HaShanah* 16a; It should be noted, however, that this new aspect of the festival, surprisingly, did not find liturgical expression until the third century C.E., in the *Tekiata d'-Rav*, specifically in the prayer, *Atah zokher*. This time-lag may have been caused by the persistence of other traditions concerning the *Yom Ha-Din*, e.g., as an aspect of the Messianic era or the belief that there existed daily and even hourly judgment of individuals. See Hayyim Leshem, *Shabbat u-Mo'adei Yisrael*, vol. I (Tel Aviv: Niv, 1965), pp. 85-86. Cf. n. 33 below. Tosefta *Rosh HaShanah* 1: 13, ed. Lieberman, p. 308.

16 Tosefta *Rosh HaShanah* 1: 13, ed. Lieberman, p. 308.

din b-rahamim), while *Yom Ha-Kippurim* is the Day of Mercy with Judgment (*yom rahamim b-din*)."[17] Such was the gradual transformation of the original festive joy[18] of the Biblical "first day of the seventh month" into the somberness of a satellite to the Day of Atonement, from a theological point of view.

Even the intervening days took on a solemn character. The entire period from the first to the tenth of *Tishre* came to be considered a religious unit and was, in the Amoraic period, given the name, *Aseret y'mei teshuvah*, the "Ten Days of Penitence."[19] The Sages characteristically found a Midrashic allusion to this ten-day period in the Biblical verse, "seek the Lord when He may be found, call upon Him while He is near" (Isaiah 55: 6).[20] These days were considered a special time of grace. This is not to say, of course, that thoughts and acts of penitence are not in order at other times and seasons. The Sages taught that every day a call comes forth from heaven exclaiming, *shuvu banim shovavim*, "Return, you back-sliding children" (Jeremiah 3: 14 and 22).[21] The prayer recited each day in the Amidah (*birkhat Teshuvah*) which praises God as "Lord, who delights in repentance," and which originally read, in the Palestinian Rite, "Turn us (*hashiveinu*) unto Yourself, O Lord, and we shall be turned (*v-nashuvah*)," is an answer to this call. Solomon Schechter comments:

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17 See *Perushei ha-Torah la-Ramban*, ed. H. D. Chavel, vol. II (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kuk, 1975), p. 154, where the source of the idea is traced to the *Zohar* on *Vayera*, fol. 114b.

18 Numbers 10: 10; Nehemiah 8: 9-10. Cf. Leshem, pp. 86-91 and Kieval, pp. 81, 84.

19 Yerushalmi *Rosh HaShanah* 1: 3, fol. 57a. The Bavli (*Rosh HaShanah* 18a and elsewhere) refers to this period simply as *'asarah yamim she-bein Rosh HaShanah l'-Yom Ha-Kippurim*. An alternate term is *bein keseh l'-asor*. A remote parallel between this ten-day period and the *zagmuk* period of the Babylonian calendar has been noted—see Snaith, p. 135; Segal, pp. 252-253; and Gaster, p. 124 (all cited above, n. 2). *Zagmuk* was a period of eleven days from the first to the eleventh of *Nisan* at the Babylonian New Year festival. These days were considered "outside" the calendar. There is an ancient tradition preserved in Sifra, *Behar* 2, ed. Weiss, fol. 106d (cf. *Rosh HaShanah* 8b), in the name of Ishmael the son of R. Yohanan ben Beroka, that the slaves who were freed in the Jubilee year feasted from the first of *Tishre* to the tenth of *Tishre* and then returned to their old homes of pre-slavery days. Snaith interprets this tradition as follows: "these days were thus 'outside' the calendar. The slaves were no longer slaves, but at the same time they were not wholly free."

20 *Rosh HaShanah* 18a. Cf. Yerushalmi *Bikkurim* 2: 1, fol. 64d.

21 *Pirke d'Rabbi Eliezer*, chapters 15 and 43 and commentaries.

> The call, however, seems to have been especially heard on the Ten Penitential Days. These Ten Penitential Days are distinguished by special liturgies and by special ascetic practices. But they are only set apart—as a special time of grace, but not as the only days of repentance. For repentance is as wide as the sea, and as the sea has never closed and man can always be cleansed by it, so is repentance, so that whenever man desires to repent, the Holy One, blessed be He, receives him.[22]

Pious Jews, especially in medieval times, fasted throughout the Ten Days of Penitence, except for the Rosh HaShanah festival,[23] the Sabbath, and the eve of Yom Kippur, which, by ancient tradition, was noted as a day of feasting.[24] The third of *Tishre* is a mandatory public fast day known as *Tsom Gedaliah*, the Fast of Gedaliah. Gedaliah ben Ahikam, governor of Judea under the Babylonians after the First Destruction, was murdered by fellow Judeans (II Kings 25: 25; Jeremiah 41: 2). This event continued to be observed as a memorial of the destruction of Solomon's Temple and undoubtedly contributed an extra dimension of sorrowfulness to the solemn season. The Sabbath day which falls within the Ten Days of Penitence is known as *Shabbat Teshuvah* or *Shabbat Shuvah*, the Sabbath of "Return"—an allusion to the opening words of the Haftarah for that day: *Shuvah Yisrael ad Adonai Elohekha…* "Return, O Israel, unto the Lord, your God, for you have stumbled in your iniquity" (Hosea 14: 2). Sephardic Jews call this Sabbath also *Shabbat Beintayim*, i.e., the Intervening Sabbath.

It is interesting to note that even sectarians who reject the Rabbinic formulation of Jewish tradition—in this instance that the first of *Tishre* is the New Year—nevertheless mark the ten days culminating in Yom Kippur in much the same way as the Talmudic *Aseret Y'mei Teshuvah*. The Karaites, for example, who designate the first of *Tishre* as *Yom Teru'ah* and observe their own "Rosh HaShanah" on the first day of *Nisan*, nevertheless mark with a special liturgy what they call *Aseret Y'mei Rahamin* ("The ten days of Divine

22 Solomon Schechter, *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology* (New York: Macmillan, 1909 and reprints), p. 342.

23 Ginzberg observes that, in the course of time, the dividing line between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur became so thin that, in Geonic times "and perhaps even earlier than their time", there is a record of fasting in Palestine even on Rosh HaShanah, despite the fact that fasting is forbidden on a festival. See Levi Ginzberg, *Perushim v-Hiddushim ba-Yerushalmi* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1941-1961), Vol. IV, p. 258. Cf. Levi Ginzberg, Ginze Schechter, vol. II (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1929), pp. 541-542 and 564-565 [and Yitzhak Gilat, *Perakim Behishtalshelut Hahalakhah*, Ramat Gan, 1992, pp. 120-122].

24 *Berakhot* 8b and parallels.

mercy"). The Samaritans call the first day of the seventh month "the Feast of Trumpets", and observe it primarily as the precursor of *Yom Ha-Kippurim* (which they call *Kippurim*). They regard the entire ten-day period from the first day through the tenth as a time of sorrow, penitence, remembrance and judgment in connection with the turn of the year.[25] For the Samaritans, Yom Kippur became the day of Judgment (*Yom al-Din*).[26] "So far as it is possible to judge, in cases where there has been an early separation of Jews from the mainstream of Jewish development in liturgies, the Festival of the New Year is one of penitence and sorrow."[27]

Ultimately, a single name evolved to characterize the twin festivals of New Year and Atonement: *Yamim Nora'im*, the "Days of Awe" or "The Sublime Days" (depending on the interpretation of the Hebrew word *nora*). This name is very popular, especially among Ashkenazic Jews. It is also used, by extension, to refer to the entire Ten Days of Repentance. The name *Yamim Nora'im* was popularized by the book that describes the customs of R. Jacob ben Moses Halevi (1355-1427), known as Maharil. In *Minhagei Maharil*, an influential work on the ritual usage of the Jews of Mayence and the Rhineland generally, the chapter on the customs of Rosh HaShanah and the month of *Elul* is entitled *Hilkhot Yamim ha-Noraim*. The name itself is much older, however; it occurs already in the writings of the 12th and 13th-century Tosafists: R. Eliezer ben Joel Halevi (Ra-aviah); his pupil, R. Isaac of Vienna; and R. Mordecai ben Hillel, a descendant of Ra-aviah who was much admired by the Maharil. The popularity of the name *Yamim Nora'im* reflects the view of the legal authorities in Northern Europe that Rosh HaShanah, like Yom Kippur, should be a day of total solemnity, devoid of the joyousness originally associated with its festive character.[28]

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25 See James Montgomery, *The Samaritans* (Philadelphia: J. C. Winston, 1907), pp. 40-41.

26 Moses Gaster, *The Samaritan Oral Law and Ancient Traditions, vol. I* (Search Publishing Company, 1932), pp. 109 ff,

27 Snaith (above, n. 2), p. 159.

28 See Leshem, pp. 88-91. Cf. Herman Kieval, *The High Holy Days, Book One: Rosh HaShanah* (New York: Burning Bush Press, 1959), reprinted in Hayyim Herman Kieval, *The High Holy Days: A Commentary on the Prayerbook of Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur* (Jerusalem: The Schechter Institute, 2004), p. 191, n. 6.

The Absence of any Reference to Teshuvah in the Foundation-Prayers of Rosh HaShanah

In view of the well-attested development of Rosh HaShanah as the beginning of the *Aseret Y'mei Teshuvah*, it is an astounding fact that the foundation-prayers (the pioneers of liturgical studies in Germany called them *Stammgebete*) for this festival, which were crystallized in the Tannaitic and Amoraic periods, contain not a single direct reference to the concept of *Teshuvah*[29]—let alone utilize the word itself in any of its many forms! The literature of the Tannaim and Amoraim abounds in references to Rosh HaShanah as an appropriate occasion for *Teshuvah*. The sounds of the Shofar, for example, are interpreted in the ancient Midrash (as well as in medieval philosophical and homiletical writings) as a "call to repentance."[30] Yet the foundation-prayers for the New Year worship, which were shaped by these same Tannaim and Amoraim, fail totally to reflect the many allusions to thoughts and acts of penitence which elsewhere characterize Rosh HaShanah.

The earliest specific mention in the Rosh HaShanah liturgy of the cardinal Jewish doctrine of *Teshuvah* comes in the *piyyutim*, the optional liturgical poetry that was composed through the post-Talmudic and medieval periods to supplement the mandatory foundation-prayers.[31] The best-known *piyyut* for Rosh HaShanah is *U-netaneh tokef*, an anonymous fragment (technically called a *silluk*) of a lost *kerovah*, probably composed in Eretz Yisrael.[32] Menahem Zulay dated this *piyyut* to the Byzantine period, probably the late eighth century.[33] It contains the verse: *U-teshuvah u-tefillah u-tzedakah ma'avirin et ro'a ha-gezerah*, "but repentance and prayer and acts of righteousness avert the evil decree" (i.e., can mitigate the severity of the Divine judgment). A much older *piyyut*, *Ha-ohez b-yad middat mishpat*, popularly known by its refrain, *V-khol ma'aminim* (ascribed by Zulay to the eminent Palestinian poet

29 George F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era*, Vols. I-III (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927-1930)., vol. I, part III, chapters V, VI; Ephraim E. Urbach, *Hazal: Pirkei Emunot v-De'ot* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1969), pp. 408-415; *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1975), pp. 462-471; Schechter, Chapters XVII, XVIII.

30 Tanhuma, *Va-yishlah*, 2. Cf. *Pesikta d-R. Kahana*, ed. Buber, 157a; ed. Mandelbaum, pp. 347-348. For discussion of these passages, see Schechter, pp. 342-343.

31 See Kieval, Chapter II. In the medieval period, entire *Selihot* are devoted to the theme of *Teshuvah*.

32 See ibid., pp. 141-145 and pp. 218-219, n. 27.

33 On the basis of a manuscript in the British Museum G 5557 or., fol. 67b-68b. See Eric Werner, *The Sacred Bridge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), p. 253.

of the Synagogue, Yannai), depicts God as delighted to accept the *Teshuvah* of His worshippers. These and many similar references in the *piyyutim* of Rosh HaShanah all tend to obscure the fact that the older foundation-prayers are completely silent on the theme of *Teshuvah*.

Even more remarkable, perhaps, is the fact that this strange silence evoked no reaction either in the traditional commentaries or in the critical studies by modern scholars of Jewish liturgy. Professor Leon J. Leibreich called these puzzling matters to the attention of the present writer but offered no definitive solution. The conventional explanation is that Rosh HaShanah is, after all, only the beginning of the *Aseret Y'mei Teshuvah* and that the proper occasion for prayers on this theme is the Day of Atonement, where they indeed are found in abundance. There is, in addition, a plethora of prayers on the *Teshuvah* theme in the Selihot ritual, which is recited for a number of days prior to Rosh HaShanah, as well as during the *Aseret Y'mei Teshuvah*. These "explanations," however, only deepen the mystery of why Rosh HaShanah, as the first of the Ten Days of Penitence, was not provided—from the very first—with prayers that specifically dealt with the concept of *Teshuvah*.

It is a paradox that calls for a solution. Liebreich, in his classic analysis of the Rosh HaShanah liturgy,[34] pointed out the conservative nature of classical Jewish prayer. Only those religious ideas that had, over a long period of time, gained universal acceptance were incorporated into the normative liturgy. Thus, for example, the conception of Rosh HaShanah as commemorating the creation of the world and as a day of judgment involving life-and-death decisions for mankind is already mentioned, as we have seen, in the Mishnah and Tosefta. Yet the earliest references to these ideas in the foundation-prayers of Rosh HaShanah are not found until the third century, when Rav (or his School) composed the prayer, *Atah Zokher*.[35] The present writer suggests this explanation: The idea that Rosh HaShanah is a proper occasion for *Teshuvah* did not gain universal acceptance early enough to be explicitly incorporated into the foundation-prayers of Rosh HaShanah as formulated in the Talmudic period. It remained for the poets of the Synagogue (*payyetanim*) to repair this deficiency.

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34 See Leon J. Liebreich, "Aspects of the New Year Liturgy", HUCA, XXXIV (1963), especially p. 176. In the addenda to that monograph, Liebreich effectively refuted as unhistorical and uncritical the thesis of M. H. Segal, in his "The Religion of Israel Before Sinai", JQR, LIII (January 1963), that these conceptions of Rosh HaShanah date from First Temple times and that the Synagogue liturgy for the New Year is the direct descendant of the older liturgy of the Temple during the period of the First Commonwealth. Cf. above, n. 14.

35 See Kieval, pp. 158-160.

The Liturgical Influence of Rosh HaShanah upon Yom Kippur

It is clear from the above that Yom Kippur exerted a dominant influence on the theological development of Rosh HaShanah. On the other hand, liturgical influences flowed primarily in the opposite direction, from Rosh HaShanah to Yom Kippur. The preeminent Talmudist of his time, Louis Ginzberg, analyzed this process in great detail, citing many examples, and we quote here only his summary statement: "We have any number of prayers on Yom Kippur which originally were established for Rosh HaShanah only."[36] He attributes this phenomenon primarily to the fact that the great fast day never entirely lost its original character as a festival day of joyousness, similar to Rosh HaShanah—as the Torah indicates by listing them both side-by-side with the joyous festivals of Pesah, Shavuot and Sukkot in the Festal Calendar of Leviticus, chapter 23. Ginzberg cites, in this connection, a *Genizah* fragment of the *Kedushat Ha-Yom* benediction for Yom Kippur which includes the words: *va-titen lanu—mo'adim l-simhah—l-simhah u-l'yom-tov*, that is, "You (God) have given us festivals for joy... for joy and for a holiday". The foundation-prayers of Rosh HaShanah, which were deemed particularly appropriate for Yom Kippur, were the three *Malkhut* prayers: *U-v'khen ten pahdekha, Aleinu* (in all the Rites known to us) and *Melokh al kol ha-olam* (only in the Sephardic, Persian, and Yemenite Rites). But there were other prayers borrowed from the Rosh HaShanah Amidah, with the result that the Yom Kippur Amidah bears a remarkable resemblance in all Rites to that of the New Year.[37]

The chief distinction between them is the *Viddui*, confession of sins, which is added to the Amidah only on the Day of Atonement. Furthermore, in the course of time, the Yom Kippur liturgy—especially in the Ashkenazic Rite—appropriated not only elements from the statutory foundation-prayers, but even some of the optional *piyyutim*.[38]

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36 Ginzberg, Vol. IV, pp. 232 ff, especially p. 258.

37 E.g., the eulogy, *Ha-melekh ha-kadosh*; the phrase *melekh 'al kol ha-aretz* (in the *Kedushat ha-Yom* and *Haftarah* benedictions); the *U-v'khen* group and the *Me-'ein Zikhronot* interpolations in each Amidah; and *Aleinu* in the Musaf (although neither Amram nor Sa'adiah record this practice, except for one manuscript of Amram's *Seder*). Mention should also be made of *Ya-'aleh v-yavo*, which originated as a *zikkaron*-type prayer for Rosh HaShanah (see Liebreich, above, n. 34, pp. 125 ff.) The Sephardic, Persian, and Yemenite Rites for Yom Kippur also borrow the main body of the *Kedushat Ha-Yom* prayer used on Rosh HaShanah, viz., *Melokh 'al kol ha-'olam*, etc. On the appropriation of other prayers originally intended for Rosh HaShanah, see Tzvi Karl, *Mehkarim be-Toledot ha-Tefillah* (Tel Aviv: Twersky, 1950), p. 120, n. 128.

38 E.g., *L-'El 'orekh din, Ha-ohez b-yad middat mishpat, U-netaneh tokef.* Karl,

On the other hand, none of the *piyyutim* of Yom Kippur appear in the liturgy of Rosh HaShanah! These influences and borrowings notwithstanding, the liturgy of Yom Kippur is quite unique and distinct from that of Rosh HaShanah; even in the text of the Amidah, there are appropriate changes, notably in the *Kedushat Ha-Yom* benediction.[39] On the negative side, the order of service on the Day of Atonement omits such major elements of the Rosh HaShanah liturgy as the crucial *Malkhuyot-Zikhronot-Shofarot* section; and the entire Shofar-sounding ritual—except for a symbolic blast sounded to signal the conclusion of the fast (this sounding has no organic relationship to the Shofar rite of Rosh HaShanah). On the positive side, the Yom Kippur liturgy features major rituals and prayers entirely unknown to the prayers of the New Year: the Kol Nidre ceremony; the *Selihot* and *Viddui* prayers, which are inserted into each service during the twenty-four hour ritual; the *Avodah* rite in the Musaf service; and the entire Ne'ilah service, which is recited only once a year as the concluding worship of Yom Kippur. Furthermore, all the Torah readings and Haftarot of the Day of Atonement are unique to it. Finally—aside from the relatively few popular *piyyutim* borrowed from Rosh HaShanah to which we have already alluded—the Yom Kippur liturgy is richly endowed with its own treasury of Synagogal poetry, each historical Rite having its own particular favorites.

Since there are no special home ceremonies mandated for Yom Kippur, the entire day being set aside for fasting and prayer in the Synagogue, it is inevitable that the worship should have been extended far beyond ordinary limits. The inordinate length of the worship for the great fast day was already proverbial in early Rabbinic literature.[40] By the Geonic period, the worship became so lengthy and the congregation, often reinforced by worshippers from neighboring villages, so unfamiliar even with the sequence of the prayers, that the Reader on occasion had to take time out to instruct the congregation in the

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ibid. includes in this category the ancient *piyyut, Od yizkor lanu ahavat etan*, which has special reference to the first day of the seventh month, as mentioned in Nehemiah 8: 10, *ki kadosh ha-yom la-'Adoneinu.*

39 For a detailed listing of the variations in the text of the foundation-prayers for Yom Kippur, see the commentary *Tikkun Tefillah* in *Siddur Otzar ha-Tefillot*, ed. A. L. Gordon, vol. II (Vilna: Romm, 1928), pp. 1109 ff. Cf. Ze'ev Yawitz, *Sefer Mekor ha-Berakhot* (Berlin, 1910), p. 39.

40 Tosefta *Berakhot* 1: 6, ed. Lieberman, p. 3; ibid. 3: 6, p. 13. Cf. *Megillah* 23a, *Berakhot* 31a and *Avodah Zarah* 8a. Cf. *Soferim* 19: 6, ed. Higger, p. 328, which distinguishes the prayers of both Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur from all others.

general liturgy of Yom Kippur, as we learn from a Geonic responsum.[41] The earliest reference to the use of a written text for worship is found, interestingly, in connection with the prayers of Yom Kippur. R. Yehudai Gaon of Sura (died 763) permitted the Reader to recite the lengthy and unfamiliar liturgy for the Day of Atonement from a written text. On all other occasions, however, the prayers were to retain the oral form that had characterized Jewish worship from time immemorial.[42]

Hayyim (Herman) Kieval (1920-1991) was ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1942, and left an extensive legacy there as a scholar and teacher, and at Temple Israel in Albany, New York as a pulpit rabbi and innovator. He developed a new format for familiarizing worshipers with the weekly Torah portion through questions, discussions and answers between aliyot. Over the years many other American rabbis adopted the idea, and a disproportionately large number of young people from his synagogue went on to become rabbis, cantors and educators, largely due to his influence. A prolific writer, especially on liturgy, his major interest was the High Holy Days. Book One on Rosh HaShanah appeared in 1959, and in 1977 he received a doctorate in Hebrew Letters for his Thesis on The Evening Service of Yom Kippur. That historical study formed the basis for Book Two, Kol Nidre Night, which was published along with a reprint of Book One in 2004—two volumes in one.

This article is excerpted with permission from the latter publication, ***The High Holy Days: A Commentary on the Prayerbook of Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur*** *by Hayyim Herman Kieval, second edition, edited by David Golinkin and Monique Susskind Goldberg (The Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, 2004, pp. 229-238, 315-318). [Footnote 6 in square brackets was added by David Golinkin.] The book may be ordered by Journal readers—at a special price—from* www.schechter.edu.

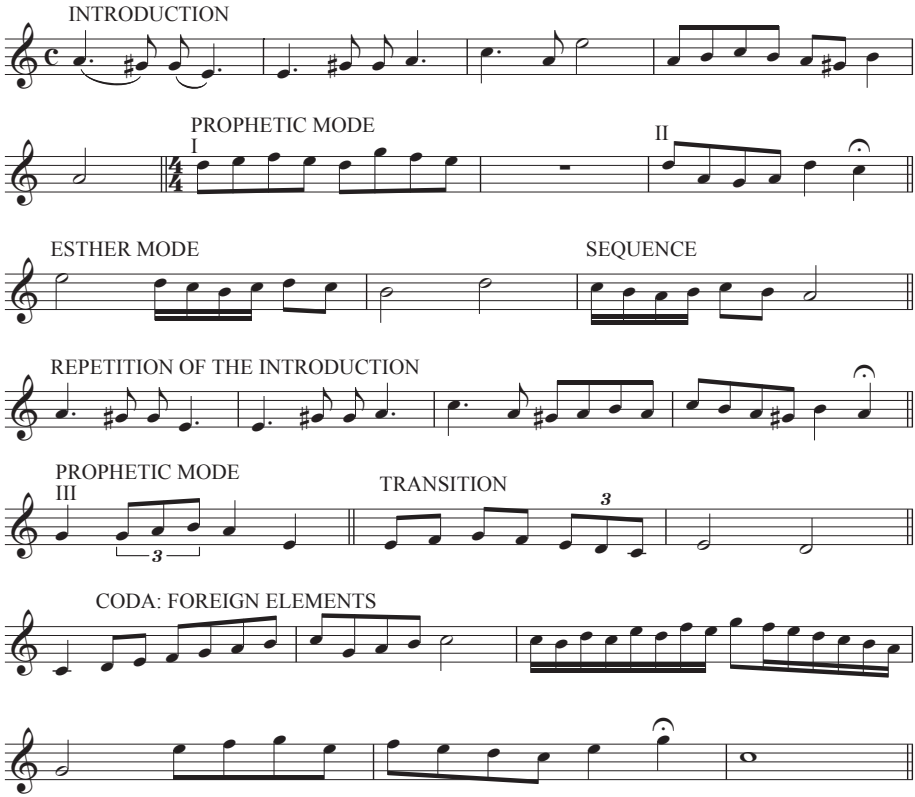
41 *Teshuvot ha-Geonim*, ed. Assaf (Jerusalem, 1942), pp. 88 ff. See also Sherira's responsum in B. M. Lewin, *Otzar ha-Geonim*, I, Part 1, p. 58. For a survey of the expansion of the Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur liturgy in Geonic times, see Salo Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, vol. VII (Philadelphia, 1958), pp. 72, 79.

42 See Louis Ginsburg, *Geonica*, vol. I (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1909), pp. 119 ff.

The Kol Nidre—At Least 1200 Years Old
by Johanna Spector

Jews everywhere usher in the Day of Atonement with the chanting of Kol Nidre, surely the most famous of all Jewish prayers. Its eloquent melody is not only a fitting setting of that holiest of Yom Kippur texts, it is also music that has caught the very essence of the Jewish soul and spirit.

I could therefore never understand why some authorities should suspect the Kol Nidre melody of having a non-Jewish origin. In his thorough investigations, Abraham Zvi Idelsohn[1] analyzed the Kol Nidre as follows. **(Example 1.)**

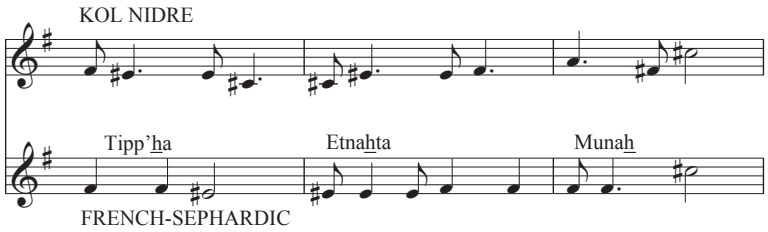


Example 1. *Idelsohn's Analysis of* ***Kol Nidre*** *Motives*

1 "Der Juedische Tempelgesang," in Guido Adler, ed., *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte*, Vol. I, p. 152.

The introduction can be found in Spanish folk song of the 16th century.[2] Idelsohn attempts to show that while motives I, II, III and IV are taken from the ancient Jewish cantillations and the *Coda* is modern, the *introduction* is foreign. But the introduction is what *makes* the Kol Nidre! Every Jew knows and loves the introduction, even if he or she does not remember what melodic motives follow after it. And this whole section should not be Jewish?

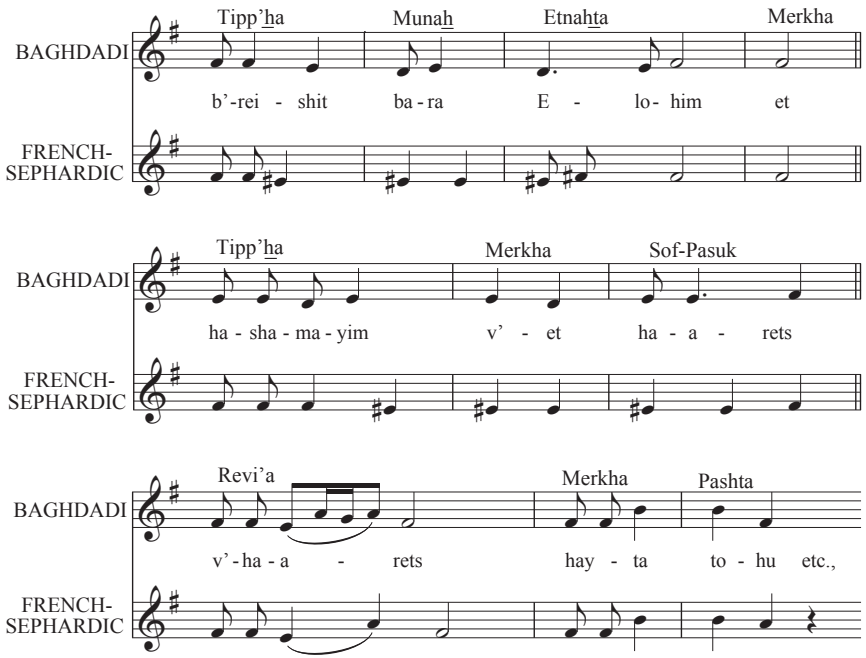
While studying the cantillations of the Hebrew Bible, I came across the French-Sephardic performance tradition for the first passage of Genesis: *B'reishit bara Elohim et ha-shamayim v'et ha'arets*. The melody was notated by Samuel Naumbourg in his *Receuil de chants réligieux* (1847). Here are the openings of Kol Nidre and the French-Sephardic cantillation for *B'reishit Bara Elohim...* **(Example 2.)**



Example 2. *Naumbourg's notation of French-Sephardic cantillation for* ***B'reishit Bara Elohim*** *compared to opening of Kol Nidre.*

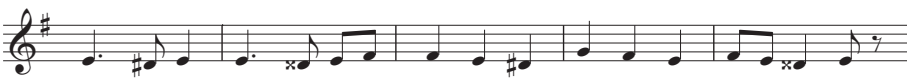
The tune seemed familiar, but I could not place it immediately. While thinking hard, it occurred to me that it strongly resembled the opening motives of Kol Nidre. At first I compared the French-Sephardic tune with the equivalent Babylonian (Baghdadi) nusah or chant pattern for the same text. The similarity was striking. **(Example 3.)**

2 Canco de Pandero, in the *Calle Catalogue*, Pedrell Edition, No. 267. Bar I is the motif of the cantillation *ta'am* (trope) Sof-pasuk; II—of Tevir; III—of Etnahta in the Prophetic mode; and IV—of Darga in the mode of Esther. The Coda consists of passages in the style of the 18th century.



Example 3. *Comparison of Baghdadi and French-Sephardic* ***cantillation*** *for B'reishit Bara Elohim*

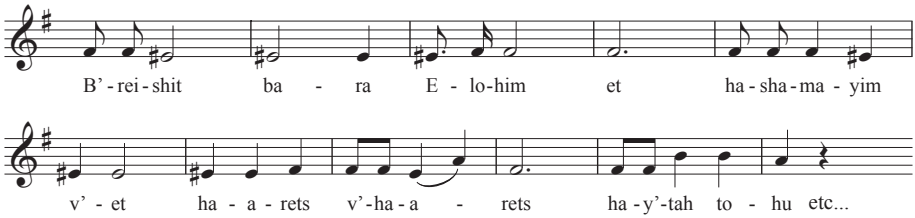
One notices that the Tipp'ha, Etnahta, Sof-pasuk, Revi'a and Pashta[3] use the same intervals, and except for Pashta, the same finalis. The only difference between the French-Sephardic and Babylonian Nusah is the employment of the half-step interval in France, and the whole-step interval in Babylonia (E# instead of E). But even this difference is not certain, since Middle Easterners are not very precise in their intervals; nor is our modern musical notation sufficiently accurate for putting down non-Western musical patterns. There is no proof whatsoever that the ancient Babylonian Jews did not use the same half-steps. On the contrary; I happened to come across a melody recorded by Idelsohn in his *Thesaurus*,[4] a melody for chanting Proverbs 1: 1-4, which employs these mentioned half-steps. The melody is from the Jewish community in Baghdad early in the 20th century.



Example 4. *Baghdadi melody for chanting* ***Proverbs****, notated by Idelsohn*

3 Five (of twenty-eight) written signs for chanting Books of the Hebrew Bible.
4 Vol. II, p. 137, W. 1938a.

This melody not only bears the mood of French-Sephardic Torah cantillation, but is reminiscent of the Kol Nidre chant. Here we have—combined—elements of all three melodies.



Example 5. *Elements of all three melodies combined*

But it is not enough to show Kol Nidre and Babylonian Torah cantillations are linked in purely musical terms. There has to be an historical linkage as well. It is not mere coincidence that the public chanting of *B'reishit bara Elohim...* in both French-Sephardic and Babylonian practice bears a likeness to Kol Nidre. It is also well known that Sephardic pronunciation of Hebrew is the continuation of Babylonian-Jewish pronunciation thousands of years ago. Ashkenazic pronunciation of Hebrew, contrarily, follows the ancient custom of the Land of Israel. Additionally, we know that the bulk of the Jews from Babylonia migrated to Spain, from which place the Sephardic nusah was carried to France after the expulsion of 1492. Therefore, it is no wonder that the cantillation of the Bible, and with it the melody of *B'reishit bara …* remained the same in France as it had been in Babylonia. No wonder, also, that a Babylonian melody for chanting the opening verses of Proverbs should contain motives of Babylonian Torah cantillation. But where does the Kol Nidre fit? What does it have to do with *B'reishit*?

Evidence for the use of Kol Nidre in Babylonia is presented in the *Ginzei Schechter* edited by Louis Ginzberg.[5] There we find a statement by Paltoi Gaon that Kol Nidre was recited by popular demand in the Geonic Academy at the Babylonian city of Pumbadita long before the practice was introduced to the larger and better-known Academy at Sura, where it had been deprecated as a "foolish custom" by Natronai Gaon in the mid-9th century. Nonetheless, the *Seder* (Order of Prayers) of his successor, Amram Gaon, in 870, includes the complete text of Kol Nidre, largely in Hebrew, rather than the Aramaic that has come down to us. An 8th-century ban on Kol Nidre's recitation, by Yehudai Gaon of Sura,[6] establishes the existence of the Kol Nidre text at least as

5 New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Vol. II, 1929: 120.
6 H. Tikochinsky. *Takkanot ha-Ge'onim* (Tel-Aviv—Jerusalem, 1940), p. 99.

far back as then—and most probably a century earlier in Pumbadita. In *Der Juedische Gottesdienst*,[7] Ismar Elbogen writes the following:

> In the Babylonian academies the opening section of *B'reishit* was recited—by heart—during the Minhah service of Yom Kippur afternoon. [In the 10th century] Saadyah Gaon still mentions the custom of reading the opening verses of Genesis on Yom Kippur—but during Ne'ilah. After his time, however, the practice was discontinued.

Later generations do not know anything about this custom. Yet, the Roman Catholic Church retained the tradition of reading from Genesis on its highest fast day.[8] We learn from the above passages that exilic Jewish communities at the end of the First Millennium must have been very familiar with the cantillating tune of *B'reishit bara Elohim…*, since it had to be recited by heart, twice, on the Day of Yom Kippur. It is not surprising, then, that the melody attached to the cantillation of *B'reishit* and associated with the most important day of the year became part of the melodic repertoire of Yom Kippur, and likewise, that it should be adapted for a text that was finally being accepted in all quarters despite rabbinic opposition: Kol Nidre. The most popular prayer in Jewish life grew out of the melodic patterns of ancient Torah cantillation, which only proves that contemporary Jews are still linked with their ancestors who lived and flourished in Babylonia 1200 years ago!

Johanna Spector is Professor Emeritus of Ethnomusicolgy at the Jewish Theological Seminary's College of Jewish Music, where she taught for over three decades. Born in Latvia, she arrived in the United States as a teenager after World War II, having been trained as a concert pianist and bearing a state diploma from the Akademie fur Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Vienna. She enrolled at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, completed the rabbinical program and graduated as a Doctor of Hebrew Studies. As a research fellow at Hebrew University in Jerusalem she retraced the path taken decades earlier by Abraham Idelsohn and Robert Lachmann in recording—this time on film—the music of Jews from Yemen, Iran, Morocco, Tunisia, Djerba, Libya, Egypt, Turkey, Greece and Bukhara who had resettled in Israel. She wrote this article for the ***Jewish Music Notes*** *(now-defunct monthly publication of the National Jewish Welfare Board),* ***October 1950****.*

7 Frankfurt: Kaufmann, 1931: 167.

8 S. Rahif. *Mittellungen des Septuagintaunternehmens zu alttestamentlichen Lectionen der griechischen Kirche* (Goettingen, Koenigl: Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften), 1915.

Ad Yom Moto: Life's a Game?
by Gershon Freidlin

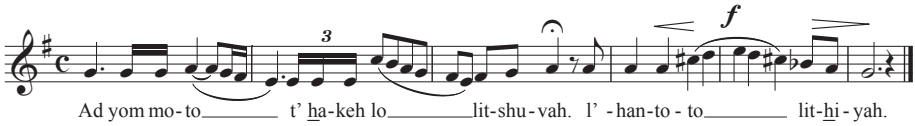
> ***Yidl, fidl, shmidl—dos lebn iz a shpas.***
> (from the song, *Yidl Mitn Fidl—*
> music: A. Ellstein, lyrics: I. Manger)

Molly Picon sang that "Life is a *shpas*"—a joke, a trifle, and why not also, "a game?" As in "gaming," "gambling?"

Let's say that you—also I—are a pit of slime, a cesspool, if you prefer. But, by lifelong, hyper-attentive rolling of the dice, the human being can de-slime himself, can end up a hero-golem rather than a turd. This, by playing the game of striving for a Good Name.

With the same sentiment, dear Cantor, do you infuse us each Yom Kippur A.M. as in the Amidah you intone

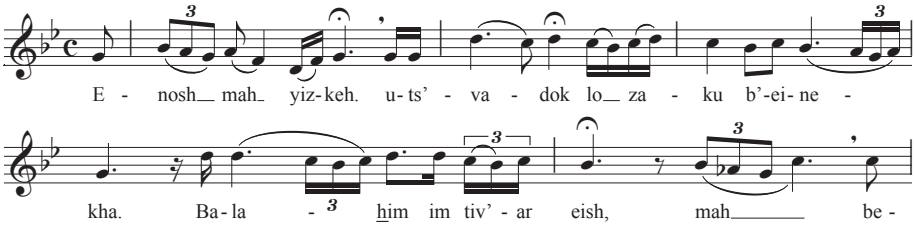
> *Ad yom moto t'-hakeh lo li-tshuvah…*
> Till the day of our death do You wait,
> that we might repent,



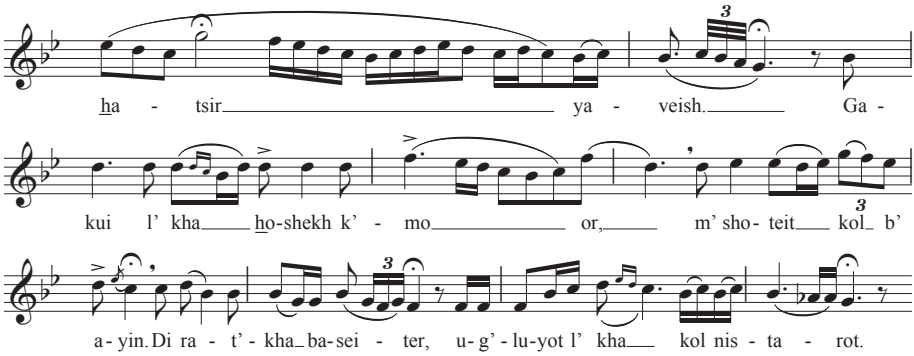
Example 1. *Meshullam ben Kalonymus'* ***Ad yom moto,*** *(1091), Baer No. 1375*

then follow it with

> *Enosh, mah yizkeh*? *U-ts'va dok lo zaku b'-einekha*!
> If the Heavenly Hosts can barely be pure,
> what hope is there for us Lowlies!



Example 2. *Meshullam ben Kalonymus'* ***Enosh mah yizkeh,*** *after Weisgal (Levine 2006, No. 3)*



Example 2. *Continued*

You conclude by repeating the refrain, "Till the day of our death, do You wait, that we might repent." In between you tell us where we are really at.

Lest we fall forever into despair, at the climax of this *piyyut* (the so-called *M'hayyeh* of a 10-part *K'rovah*), our medieval colleague and teacher, Meshullam ben Kalonymus of Rome, tells us how to climb out:

Sheim tov yikneh

Work incessantly at acquiring a Good Name.

Does this approach work? I'm not sure that anyone knows for sure. I can speak of those for whom it surely could NOT work—you can probably think of your own exceptions, too.

Such as, those born into an incurably foul Ghetto where the chances are slight, of setting one's soul above: incessant danger; poor health, nutrition and education; TV messages; despondent, enraged and hopeless family members and neighbors; plus the likelihood of growing up to expect jail time.

Without free and safe moments to contemplate reaching up for a Good Name, it is unlikely that there is a way to achieve it. Atop the anxiety we all feel for being ever-mortal, the terror a Ghetto-human must feel gives him no space to develop soul enough to place a Good Name at the top of his wish list. Thus, if so many are already presumed excluded from the "bourgeois" pursuit of the Good Name, what does Reb Meshulam really offer? Less than a pair of Adidas sneakers!

Not so fast: any consolation has its limits. The heartiest, sincere "Good morning!" said to someone in a foul enough mood, is less than useless. (Compare this to the halakhic etiquette of what—and what not—to say in the

presence of a mourner.) A good word, Prozac or good advice, works only for whom it works. So too, Meshullam's *piyyut.*

Certainly, the text is not meant to lead us into despair deeper than we might already be in. Yet, in 1978, I coached it to an actor about to perform in the Yiddish-language playwright, Jacob Gordin's *God, Man and Devil*. There, the Faust-like lead character placed a noose around his own neck—obviously believing that recapturing a good name was out of the question—and chanted our *piyyut* as a stand-up suicide note. Our playwright considered his character-in-despair as one beyond the pale of the Good Name club, and appropriately, let him draw the noose.

Whether or not the character's situation was in any way redeemable—hence obviating the need for suicide by going for even a sniff of a Good Name—I do not know.

I, for one, do take comfort in the *Enosh Mah Yizkeh* (fortunately being restored in the latest Conservative mahzor), especially when intoned by a good hazzan.

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The Day of Atonement

by Sampson Raphaelson

"What Jack Robin needs," said David Lee, who owns some of the whitest of Broadway's white lights, "is a wife."

"What our Jakie needs," said Jack Robin's father, old Cantor Rabinowitz, of the Hester Street Synagogue, "is a God."

"What I need," said Jack Robin, "is a song-number with a kick in it. The junk that Tin Pan Alley is peddling these days is rusty—that's all—*rusty.*"

And the sum and substance of it was a sober-faced Jack, engaged fitfully in experiments with pleasure, a worried but watchful David Lee, and a tragically lonely household on Hester Street, where dwelt the aged cantor and his wife. For Jack was no ordinary singer of ragtime. Those dark eyes of his might have been the ecstatic eyes of a poet in the days when the Chosen People lived sedately in the land of Canaan. They might have been prophetic eyes, stern and stirring, in the years of Zedekiah, son of Josiah, King of Judah, when Jerusalem "knew not its God." They might have been deep wells of lamentation even one generation ago had his lyric voice been born to cry the sorrows of Israel in a Russian synagogue.

But he lived in New York, and his slender, well-set-up figure was draped in perfectly fitting suits of Anglo-Saxon severity, and his dark hair was crisply trimmed and parted after the fashion of young America, and the black eyes in his thin, handsome face were restless, cynical and without joy… It had long been a matter of profound distress to the cantor that a youth with so nimble a mind should be so diffident in the presence of the great culture of the noblest of all peoples. For ten generations, in Russia and now in America, the name "Rabinowitz" had stood for devout, impassioned *Khazonus,* and Jakie's father was animated by the one desire that his son should become even a greater cantor than himself.

"I can see it comes a day when the Children of Israel will need it more *Khazonim,"* the old father had said once to his young son. "It's too good here in America—too much money, telephones and trains—and too much ragstime. A

little bit more God ain't a bad thing, Jakie. Music is God's voice, and you make it your papa and mamma happy, Jakie, if you grow up to be a great *Khazn* like your grandfather in Vilna, *olov hasholom.*"

"Aw, gee," Jakie had responded; "I wish the *Rebbi* would comb his whiskers oncet in a while!"

Fervently considering his God, the cantor had beaten Jakie soberly, and the boy had been inclined after that to listen in silence, if with resentment, to his pleas and homilies… That night, while his parents slept, Jakie ran away from home. A policeman found him, two days later, white with hunger and dragging his feet with weariness. His parents, who had become panic-stricken, overfed him and put him tenderly to bed. In the next few days they argued and pleaded with him, and, before they admitted defeat, wept before him. "I'll sing in the choir every Sabbath," he said then. "But, honest, pa, *honest,* I'd quicker die than go every day to a *Cheider.*"

His father had to find comfort during the several years that followed in hearing the liquid golden tones of Jakie's alto voice in the choir only on Sabbath and on holy days. "Maybe," he said to his wife, "maybe when he gets older, he'll see how beautiful is *Yiddishkeit.* Maybe he would stop hanging around music-places and singing these ragstime songs what all the bums they sing."

"I'm afraid, Yossele; I'm afraid," she sighed. "When he grows older, a job he'll get it—in a tailor shop, maybe—and right away with a girl he'll be running around."

"Better he should never marry," the cantor cried, "than with one of these peek-a-boo-waist girls with paint on the faces! Oy, Rivka mine, why ain't it here in America good healthy girls like you was?"

*****

But girls were not in Jakie's mind. The few who moved through his life had laughed too much and listened too little. They were shrill creatures, made for anything but love. They were haughty when they should have been humbly eager, and they greedily mimicked things they should austerely have left alone. He might have sunk to a Russian kind of morbidness if he had not been caught up in the stream of highly seasoned folk-song which poured constantly from Tin Pan Alley.

By the time he was eighteen he moved in an unreal, syncopated world of his own. If he had a sentimental grief, what better relief than sitting in the dark of his bedroom in the tiny Hester Street flat and howling dolefully the strains of "Down by the Old Mill Stream"? If the joys of being alive smote him,

what could more sweetly ease the ache of happiness than the plaintive blare of "Alexander's Ragtime Band"? So he haunted the motion-picture shows. Then one night he got a job singing popular songs in the Great Alcazar Palace on Grand Street—one of the new movie-houses with rococo modeling in front, a house penetrating into the bowels of the building to a greater depth than its rickety, makeshift predecessors. And later that night his father told him never to show his face in the Hester Street home again.

"Better I shouldn't have it no son at all. Your loafer's talk stabs me in my heart. I couldn't bear to see your face no more—bum! In a synagogue you don't even put your head. For ten generations was every Rabinowitz a God-fearing *Khazn,* and you—my only son—street-songs you are singing! Go! Be a ragstime singer with the bums!"

How could the old cantor, or, for that matter, Jakie himself, understand that instead of being sinful and self-indulgent, loose and lazy, this grave-eyed boy with the ways of the street was sincerely carrying on the tradition of plaintive, religious melody of his forefathers—carrying on that tragic tradition disguised ironically with the gay trappings of Broadway and the rich vulgarity of the East Side? Instinctively the East Side responded to it, for people came hours early to the Great Alcazar Palace and stood in line twenty deep to hear Jakie, now Jack Robin, sing "Lovey Joe" or "'When Dat Midnight Choo-Choo Leaves for Alabam'."

"Chee, but that baby can rag!" they said, as they swayed, hypnotized, to the caressing quavers of his voice. They knew only that he caught at their heart-strings. They failed to perceive that Jakie was simply translating the age-old music of the cantors—that vast loneliness of a race wandering "between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born"—into primitive and passionate Americanese.

One year Jakie spent thus, and then David Lee, on a periodical scouting expedition, drifted into the Great Alcazar Palace. A short, fat man with cold blue eyes in a round pink face, Lee slipped unnoticed into the dark of the last row. He heard Jack Robin render "Underneath the Sugar Moon" with swifter, more potent tunefulness than a certain black-face comedian whom he was paying a thousand a week for singing the same song on Broadway. As a result, Jack Robin found himself booked on the great Keats vaudeville circuit…

*****

Jack saw his parents occasionally. His mother's furtive pride in the adulation which younger Hester Street gave to her son had even begun to reflect itself

in a way in the old cantor. "Every actor he's ain't a loafer, Yossele," she would say. "Look—is Jacob Adler a loafer? A finer man you couldn't find it if you should search a whole lifetime."

"But he's a *Yiddisher* actor, *Leben.* He feels the *Yiddishe* heart. And our Jakie sings ragstime—like a *Sheigetz!"*

"I know—I know," she soothed him. "But he's an American boy. And he's a good boy. He's sending you and me presents only last month from New Haven. He lives a clean life, Yossele. Maybe soon he makes enough money and he goes into business and gets married and comes regular every Sabbath and holy day to the synagogue."

When he visited them in the summer, Jack's dumb unhappiness became apparent to them. They took it for a good sign—for indication of a new, more mature thoughtfulness. His booking for the year ended, he took a month's vacation and spent two weeks of it in New York. For two consecutive Sabbath days he attended the synagogue, and the old cantor, singing from the pulpit, exulted in the conviction that his son was returning to his God.

Indeed, Jack himself found a certain solace in it. As he sat on the old familiar wooden bench, clothed in the silk *Tallis*—the prayer-shawl which his father had so solemnly presented to him on the occasion of his *Bar Mitzvah*—with good old Yudelson the cobbler on one side of him, and stout, hearty, red-bearded Lapinsky the butcher on the other, he felt a singular warmth and sweetness. And the voice of his father, still clear and lyric, rising in the intricacies of the familiar old lamenting prayers—prayers which he remembered perfectly, which he would never forget—the dissonant rumble of response from the congregation, the restive shufflings of youngsters—all these were to him blessedly familiar and blissful.

In the murmurous peacefulness of those two weeks his father talked to him constantly of the austere beauties of the ancient ways of his people, and it began to appear to Jack that there was indeed something to be said for them. He could not and did not dismiss his father's world as he used to—with a sneer and the words: "Dead! I tell you that stuff's behind the times." For he began to feel that if it was a dead or a dying world, still it possessed some reality, an orderly nobility; while the world he was alive to was chaotic, crassly unreal.

During the two weeks which followed in Atlantic City he thought a good deal on this, but the nearness of violins and cocktails, the flash of women and the glamour of moonlight on the sea made it easy for him to decide arbitrarily that it was rather an abstract problem…

*****

The next Tuesday evening Jack came unexpectedly. As he stepped into the spotless little flat, his father, who was sitting before the kitchen table in his shirt-sleeves, a skullcap on his white head, reading loudly to himself from the *Mishnah,* looked up mildly over his glasses and spoke the question he must have rehearsed scores of times to himself.

"To a *Shiksa* you're engaged, ain't it?"

Jack hesitated. The calmness of his father he sensed at once as being anything but indifference. He suddenly was swept with shame for not having thought more about what his engagement would mean to them.

The old man had turned back to the *Mishnah.* Apparently, Jack's hesitation had replied adequately. And now his mother came into the kitchen from the narrow, dark corridor of the tenement. Jack kissed her wrinkled cheek. It was the first time in years that he had kissed her, and it thrilled the old woman. But in a moment she had observed the portentous absorption of her husband in his book of the Talmud.

"Yossele, don't you see our Jakie is here?"

The cantor continued with the low-murmured singsong as if he had not heard her. She turned to Jack, who gave her a queer smile and an almost imperceptible shrug of the shoulders.

"Then it's a *Shiksa?"* she whispered. Briskly she moved to the kitchen, stove. "You'll stay for supper, Jakie?" she asked over her shoulder. "Sit down. I'll have it quick ready. The soup is already on the *stove—Borsht,* red-beets soup, Jakie—and tonight we got it cucumbers in sour cream, and cheese *Blintzes,* too."

The old cantor joined them at the table, but beyond the various ritual prayers he and Jack mumbled together, he did not utter a word. The old woman, pathetically striving to eke out some harmony from the situation, made not the slightest attempt to get Jack to talk of his *fiancée.*

"You are coming to the synagogue next Sabbath?"

"I'm sorry, ma. I'm going to be terribly busy. You see, this is my one big chance. Lee has been fine, and it's up to me to repay him. He's one of these men who doesn't do things half-way. Either he backs you to the limit or he drops you. He's watching me closely, and I have to prove I can be relied upon. He's not giving me a star part, but I'm a principal, and if I make a hit, I'll rise fast

with David Lee. This is the first time, ma, that my future has meant anything to me, and I'm going to give all I have to rehearsals."

When the meal was cleared off the table, the old cantor moved with his tome to the smaller kitchen table, where he went on with his low-toned recitative of the Talmud. Jack and his mother sat in silence at the larger table. Then Jack placed his hand tenderly over hers.

"Ma, it's a funny thing, but I'm just beginning to appreciate what you and pa mean to me. I never realized it until suddenly last week. I—"

"Do you hear what our Jakie is saying, Yossele? He's saying that now he's grown up and he knows how good it is a papa and a mamma. He's saying—"

It was as if the old man had not heard.

They talked on softly, rapidly at first, exchanging ideas and comments, and then peaceful silences crept between them. After a rather long pause in the talk, his mother said, with a casual air:

"You know, Jakie, I was just thinking the other day—I was thinking that if a *Yiddishe* girl marries a *Goyisher* boy, then it's bad, because you know how it is in a house—everything is like the father wants. But if a *Yiddisher* boy marries a *Goyishe* girl, then it ain't so terrible. She could be learned to buy *Kosher* meat and to have two kinds of dishes, for *Fleischige* and for *Milchige*—and the children could be brought up like *Yiddishe* children; they could be sent to a *Cheider*—I was just thinking like this only yesterday, Jakie. Ain't it funny I should think of it?"

Jack's hand tightened over hers.

"You're sweet, ma," he said slowly. "I'm afraid it can't be. I was brought up that way, ma, and I've been unhappy all my life. And Amy was brought up the other way, and she's been happy from the day she was a baby. I'll want my children to be happy like Amy is."

The sharp sound of a book snapping shut twisted their attention to the cantor. He had risen, and, eyes, blazing, was pointing a shaking finger at Jack.

"Go out!" he cried. "Go out from my house—bum! Go!" A fit of coughing seized him, and he sank to his chair. They hastened to his side. The old man was unable to speak, but his eyes glared so that Jack stepped back. His mother turned, tragic-eyed, to him and said,

"Maybe you better go, Jakie."

*****

There are few tasks more absorbing and exacting than that of rehearsing for the "Frivolities," and the days that followed for Jack were so full that he found time only to telephone his mother. As there was no connection directly to the flat on Hester Street, Jack had to call the drug store on the corner. He succeeded in getting her but twice in the five times he called. His father was well, she told him cheerfully, but naturally getting old and feeble. She doubted whether he would be able to continue as cantor for very many more years, but thanked God that he would be able to lead in the services for the coming holy day, Yom Kippur—the Day of Atonement. "Maybe you will come to the synagogue then, and fast the whole day?" she asked wistfully.

"Ma, I don't see how I can possibly come. It's the fifteenth, and our show opens on Broadway the same evening. I—I'd give anything, ma, to be able to come. I'd do it for my own sake as well as for papa's and yours. It's beginning to mean something to me—Yom Kippur. You see how it is, don't you, ma?"

"Yes," his mother sighed; "I see."

The second time, she brought up the subject again.

"Your papa he's ain't feeling so good, Jakie. Maybe this will be his last Yom Kippur. He talks about you. He is all the time talking about you. He says God has punished him enough for his sins that he should be the last Rabinowitz in ten generations to sing *Khazonus* in a *Shul.* He don't *say* you should come on Yom Kippur—he didn't talk about that. But I think in his heart he means it, Jakie."

"I'll tell you what I'll do, ma," he replied, after some thought. "We open Monday night, and there probably will be a lot of changes made in the special rehearsal on Tuesday. But I'll try to dodge that Tuesday rehearsal and come to the synagogue for the morning and most of the afternoon."

"You're a good boy, Jakie"…

*****

At three in the afternoon, Jack, in his suite at the family hotel on Seventy-ninth Street, was busily writing a letter to Amy, who was in Salt Lake City. He had taken a hot bath, intending to sleep off some of his nervousness after this note to his sweetheart. He finished the letter and had just sunk beneath the covers of his bed when the telephone-bell rang. It was old Chayim Yudelson, friend and neighbor of his parents, to tell him that his father had just died.

When Jack's taxi-cab drew up before his home in Hester Street; a harassed policeman was swinging his club in the effort to disperse the crowd in front

of the tenement where the beloved cantor lay dead. Jack elbowed his way through. He was recognized, and a pathway was instantly made for him.

In the tiny flat were his mother, the *Shammes* of the synagogue, old Khayim Yudelson and his wife, and Lawyer Feldman, the friend of all Hester Street. Greater perhaps than her grief at the loss of the man who had loved her and his God with equal fervor for sixty years was Mrs. Rabinowitz's panic at the thought that it was Yom Kippur eve and that the lyric voice of a Rabinowitz would not be raised in supplication to wipe out the sins of the Chosen People before their Creator. When Jack crowded his way through the friends and neighbors who packed the dark, narrow corridor, she was clinging to the hand of Lawyer Feldman.

''Look, Mr. Feldman," she was saying; "it's only two hours to Yom Kippur. It's got to be a good *Khazn* to sing. The last words my Yossele he said to me, he said, 'Rivka, get our Jakie.' So low he says it, Mr. Feldman, I couldn't hardly hear him. His face was white like a *Yahrtzeit* candle, and he says to me: 'Rivka, God will forgive our Jakie if he will sing *"Kol Nidre"* for me tonight. Maybe my dying,' he says, 'will make a *Khazn* from our Jakie. Tell him, Rivka,' he says. Look, Mr. Feldman; Jakie is maybe coming here. Maybe you could talk to him. In his heart he's a good boy. Tell him—tell him—his father is dead—tell him—oh, Mr. Feldman, my heart is breaking in pieces—I—I can't talk no more——"

"Here's Jakie!" Khayim Yudelson broke in.

The next moment his mother was in his arms. Lawyer Feldman drew her gently away, and she turned into the other room—the bedroom where her dead husband lay. Silence followed. Nervously Jack went after her, fearing that silence.

It was an immaculately clean room—so clean that every rip in the wallpaper, every stain on the plastered ceiling stared at them, hollow-eyed, terrible in nakedness. The bed, a thing of iron tubing, whose green paint had long since scaled off, stood head against an ancient oak bookcase, crammed with old-fashioned mahogany-colored books of the Talmud, the *Khumesh,* the various prayer-books, and a mass of huge music portfolios filled with note-scribbled sheets. On the bed lay his father's body. It had been covered completely with a white sheet, but his mother, flung across it, had drawn the sheet off so that the wax-like face and one thin old shoulder were revealed. Jack looked long at his father's face. It was beautiful in death. Every line in it spoke of a brave, poetic fight, of deep, fierce religious faith. His mother's body shuddered, and Jack reached over to take her hand.

She rose from the bed then, and son and mother stood alone.

"I—I came as soon as I—heard," Jack said.

His mother's hand rested lightly against his coat.

"He—he died this morning. It was a quarter to twelve. Yesterday he got sick. He talked about you—all the time about you, Jakie. At a quarter to twelve he died—a quarter to twelve. He just closed his eyes—like a baby, Jakie—and he said—he said: 'Rivka,' he said, 'God will forgive our Jakie if he will sing *"Kol Nidre"* for me tonight. Maybe,' he said, 'maybe—maybe—'Oh, Jakie, I—Jakie, *mein Kindt,* your father is dead—I can't stand it—"

She was again in his arms. Lawyer Feldman appeared in the doorway.

"Better take her out of that room," he suggested: "It isn't doing her any good. Has she spoken to you about—"

Jack nodded. He gently led his mother toward the kitchen. As they passed him, the lawyer asked in a low tone,

"Are you going to do it?"

Jack placed his mother in a chair, where she sat blankly, looking first at the friends gathered in the kitchen, then out of the window where the crowds were still pushing and surging noisily, and then, in a most pathetic and forlorn way, down at her hands folded so helplessly in her lap.

The *Shammes,* who was there, mainly for the purpose of finding out whether Jack would serve as cantor that evening and the next day or whether he would have to step into the breach himself, was becoming nervous and impatient. He approached Jack, who looked unseeingly at him.

It was four-thirty. If he appeared in the show that evening, singing ragtime songs while his father lay dead—while the Hester Street Synagogue went cantorless for the first Day of Atonement in forty years—while his mother struggled under an unbearable double grief——

He turned to the *Shammes.*

"My father's *Tallis,* it is at the synagogue?"

"Yes; everything is in the *Shul,* Mr. Rabinowitz," the *Shammes* replied eagerly.

"The tunes—the *Genigen*—of the choir—are they the same my father used ten, fifteen years ago?"

"The same *Genigen,* exactly."

"All right. I'll be there at six o'clock."

As Jack took his mother in his arms to sit out the next hour with her and to comfort her, the tears for the first time since her husband died flowed from her eyes, and she said over and over to him: "In your heart you're a good boy. I always told him that in your heart you're a good boy."

*****

News travels like lightning in the East Side. "Jack Robin—the vaudeville headliner—is singing as cantor at the Hester Street Synagogue this Yom Kippur!" It might have been a newspaper scare headline, for by six-thirty that evening the slowly arriving members of the Hester Street Synagogue congregation had almost to fight their way through the mob that packed the street up to the corners of both Norfolk and Essex Streets. Wealthy East Siders, who had paid their ten and twelve dollars for pews in the much larger Beth Medresh Hagadol, neglected that comparatively splendid house of prayer to stand in the crammed lobby of the Hester Street Synagogue and listen to the golden notes of this young singer of ragtime. As he rendered *"Kol Nidre"* with a high, broken sobbing which, they insisted critically, surpassed his father's in his best days.

Every twist and turn of his father's had been branded unforgettably in Jack's memory from childhood days, but he sang the grief-laden notes with a lyric passion that was distinctly his own. The low-hanging rafters of the old synagogue, the cheap, shiny chandeliers of painted gold, the faded velvet hangings on the holy vault where the parchments of the Old Testament stood, the gold-fringed, worn white-silk cloth that covered the stand in the pulpit where he prayed—these called to something surging and powerful in him, something which made his whole life since his boyhood seem blurred and unreal.

When, with the congregation standing and swaying in humility before their Creator, he uttered that refrain which asks forgiveness for every sin of mankind from evil thoughts to murder, rising from a low singsong into a quivering, majestic wail and then breaking into incoherent plaintiveness, the sobs choked his throat.

His mother sat in the small gallery at the back reserved for women, and he saw her when, after marching slowly forward with the choir, he had flung open the hangings before the holy vault and turned to face the congregation as he led in the appeal that the "prayers of this evening shall come before the Divine Presence in the morning and by nightfall bring redemption for all sins."

When he finished the high melodious strains of this triumphant yet humble and supplicating piece, there was a low murmur of approbation throughout

the synagogue. The rabbi, a rotund little man in the front pews, turned to his neighbor and remarked: "Even Rosenblatt, when I heard him in Moscow, didn't give a *'Yaaleh'* like this. *Aza Zingen nehmt by die Hartz!*"

When the time came for *Kaddish,* the prayer uttered only by those in mourning their dead, the whole congregation rose in silence in honor of the cantor who was dead and his son and wife. The other mourners subdued their customary loud recital, and the voices of Jack and his mother, the one flowing and resonant, the other high and broken with sobs, were heard clearly. Crowds followed the couple as they slowly walked the half-block to the tenement-house that evening. As they paused on the stoop, Jack turned to the gathering people and in a low voice asked them to be good enough to leave his mother and himself alone with their grief. Instantly a cry was raised:

"Beat it!"

"Go home, bums, loafers! Ain't you got no respect for the *Khazn?"*

"G'wan! Can't you leave some peace be even on Yom *Kippur—Paskudniks!*"

The crowd dispersed.

Jack sat up until midnight that night with his mother, and then, completely weary, he fell asleep, to dream fitfully of Amy and of David Lee, of David Lee and of Amy, until morning.

*****

David Lee slept fitfully also that night. Jack's failure at the last moment to appear on the opening night had ruined three numbers and had made two others awkward, and Lee had a difficult job ahead of him in the next twenty-four hours. He wasted no time thinking about the delinquent. "He's going to do the worrying, not me," he said grimly. He stayed up until four in the morning, telephoning and telegraphing in the effort to get a substitute so much better than Jack that the reviews of Tuesday, probably derogatory, would be reversed on Wednesday morning.

His efforts did not meet with success, and he left word with his man to wake him early Tuesday. When his man called him, he asked for the morning papers. He was about to turn to the theatrical page when his eye was caught by a headline on the front sheet. Sitting on the edge of the bed, he read, and, as he read, a low whistle escaped him. He dropped the first paper and took another. He swore softly. "That damn kid!" he murmured gleefully. "That damn kid! Stevens, tell Herman to have the car out in a half-hour."

He had to slip a crisp green bank-note into the hand of the policeman before room was made for him to stand in the crush in the narrow lobby of the Hester Street synagogue. Jack Robin, swathed in the folds of a great black-striped linen *Tallis,* an elaborate and stiff, black, plush skull-cap on his head, his thin, handsome face deadly white, his dark eyes afire, was singing that splendid aria of his father's—*HaMelekh,* "The King"—and as the majesty of it rolled forth, broke, and narrowed into rivulets of humility, David Lee pinched himself to see if he were asleep.

Then, after a few moments of quick rattling recitative, Jack went on into a clear, low-toned series of sounds which had the effect of musical talking, of superbly self-contained remonstrance. This speech gradually rose to a fluttering uncertainty, a bewildered pleading, and then the climax came—a flood of confession.

Excitedly, Lee elbowed his way out of the crowd.

"Where's the nearest telephone?" he asked the policeman.

"Right on the corner—the drug store, sir."

In five minutes Harry Anthony was on the wire.

"Harry," said Lee, "do you want to hear the greatest ragtime singer in America in the making? A wonder, Harry, a wonder! Got Hal Bolton mopped off the boards. Come down right away. It's a dirty little hole down on the East Side called the Hester Street Synagogue. I'll meet you on the corner of Hester and Norfolk."

Native New Yorker Samson Raphaelson (1894-1983) wrote the short story from which the above is excerpted, for ***Everybody's Magazine****, where it appeared in January 1922. He rewrote it as a 1925 Broadway play,* ***The Jazz Singer****, starring George Jessel. Two years later it made movie history as the first "talkie," issued by Warner Brothers and featuring Al Jolson in the lead role. Among other successful films, Raphaelson wrote the screenplay for* ***Trouble in Paradise****,* ***The Last of Mrs. Cheyney****,* ***The Shop Around the Corner****,* ***Heaven Can Wait****, and* ***The Harvey Girls****. During the last ten years of his life he taught playwriting at Columbia University.*

Aaron Blumenfeld's Setting of Psalm 27— *Adonai Ori V'-Yish'i*

Gleaned from Many Sources

Aaron Blumenfeld has worked intensively—in classical, jazz, and Jewish liturgy—as a composer, teacher, cantor and conductor of synagogue choirs. He has written several large works on Jewish themes, most notably *Ezk'roh: A Symphonic Poem*, the Yiddish opera *Pagiel un Bas-Sheva*, and the present work, from the song cycle *Twelve Psalm Settings for Baritone and Piano*.

Adonai Ori V'-Yish'i (Psalm 27), recited on the Ten days of Penitence from Rosh HaShanah to Yom Kippur, expresses two opposite feelings, each of which may be felt during this period.

> On the one hand we strive for an absolute faith… ("though my father and mother leave me, God will care for me"), and on the other hand, the sense of God's absence… ("I want to see God"). But the absence of any response on God's part is the unhappy fate of the devotee. So all the psalmist can leave us with is a thin thread of faith and hope—and that consolation constitutes the last line ("Be strong, take courage, and hope in God").[1]

Aaron Blumenfeld's setting of this "Penitential" Psalm presents a challenge to hazzanim looking for a nusah-based concert piece that could be shortened for use in worship. In the first place, God's name constantly repeats (as "HaShem"), which rules out liturgical applicability for many. Secondly, the song ranges from low F to high F#, in an egalitarian age when male and female cantors are most convincing in their *middle* register. Moreover, low-voiced mezzos or contraltos might be put off by the composer's disclaimer—"for Baritone"—and most baritones would be daunted by the climaxes built in at either pitch extreme. The setting's length (247 measures) rules it out for prayer; only Traditional Ashkenazic mahzorim include the text, and those congregations which recite the psalm do so *silently* after being cued by the cantor, who then reiterates the closing verse aloud. Finally, the composer's use of Ashkenazic pronunciation seems calculated to alienate Liberal cantors, his logical consumers, who have universally opted for the Sephardic idiom.

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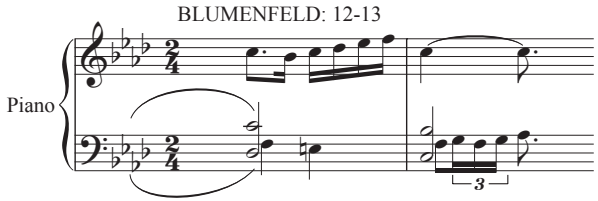
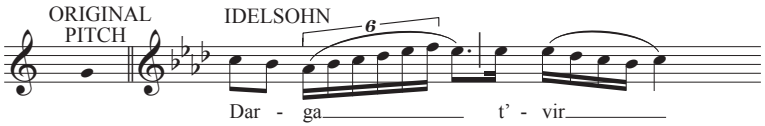
1 *Mahzor for the High Holy Days—Evening Service—Yom Kippur*, Preliminary Edition, Edward Feld, ed. (New York: The Rabbinical Assembly), 2004: 47.

On the positive side, Blumenfeld has cradled the solo line in a piano accompaniment woven around an elegant recurring motif that takes listeners into a world redolent of ancient synagogue song (measures 12-13; **Example 1**).



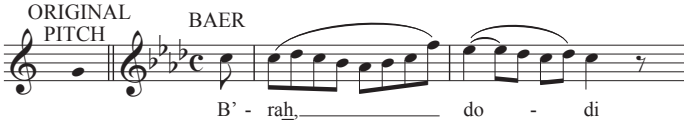
Example 1. *Blumenfeld's* ***recurring motif*** *in the piano accompaniment to Psalm 27.*

Blumenfeld's *leitmotif* compresses two linked Bible-cantillation motifs that lie at the heart of a widespread tradition for chanting *darga-t'vir* in *Sifrei Ra"Ka"Sh* (the Books of **R**ut-**K**ohelet-**Sh**ir HaShirim). Both *trop* patterns derive from Abraham Idelsohn's comparative chart of 16 diaspora communities' cantillation practice (**Example 2**).[2]



Example 2. *Widespread tradition for cantillating* ***darga-t'vir*** *in Sifrei ra"Ka"Sh.*

The linked *darga-t'vir* motifs appear in the piyyut ***B'rah, Dodi***, a religious poem sung on the first day of Pesah (Abraham Baer; **Example 3**).[3]

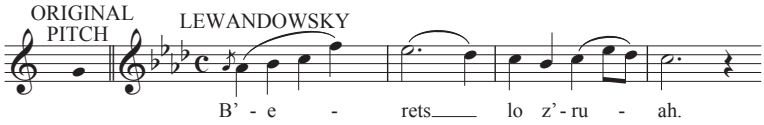


Example 3. *Sifrei Ra"Ka"Sh darga-t'vir motif in a* ***piyyut for the first day of Pesah****.*

2 Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, *Tol'dot Ha-N'ginah Ha-Ivrit* (Tel-Aviv: Dvir), 1924: 118-141, 192.

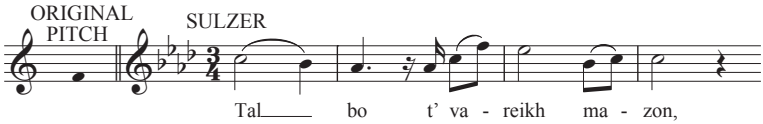
3 Abraham Baer, *Baal T'fillah* (Gothenburg: self-published), 1877, no. 788a.

The linked motifs are featured in a biblical verse—*lekhteikh aharai* ("I recall how you followed Me in the wilderness")—quoted as part of the Rosh HaShanah Musaf Amidah liturgy (Louis Lewandowsky; **Example 4**).[4]



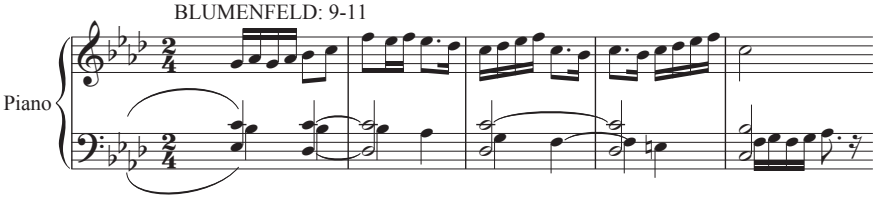
Example 4. *Sifrei Ra"Ka"Sh darga-t'vir motif in* ***Rosh HaShanah Musaf Amidah.***

The phrase also occurs in *T'fillat Tal*, the annual prayer for dew in the Land of Israel, offered on the first day of Pesah (Salomon Sulzer; **Example 5**).[5]



Example 5. *Sifrei Ra"Ka"Sh darga-t'vir motif in* ***Tal, the Prayer for Dew.***

The full-blown version of this *Sifrei Ra"Ka"Sh darga-t'vir* motif in Blumenfeld's accompaniment to Psalm 27 (measures 9-11) looks like this (**Example 6**).



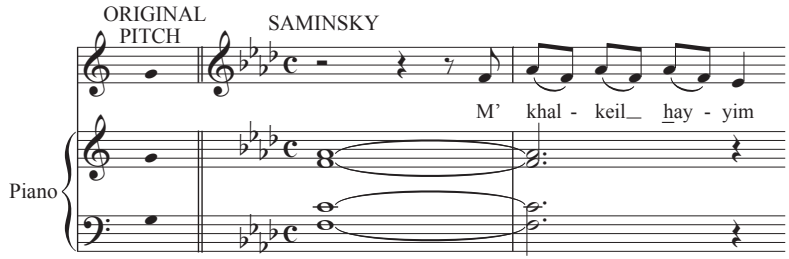
Example 6. Full-blown version *of darga-t'vir motif in Blumenfeld's Psalm 27.*

Blumenfeld varies these motivic elements through transposition and reversal, alternating linear declamation ("My adversaries failed and have fallen," measures 27-32) with rhapsodic excursion ("… to live in God's house all the days of my life," measures 71-86). His closing section enlists a cadential descent to the subtonic degree in natural minor that was preferred in Eastern

4 Louis Lewandowsky, *Todah W'simrah* (Berlin: self-published), Vol. II, 1882, no. 198.

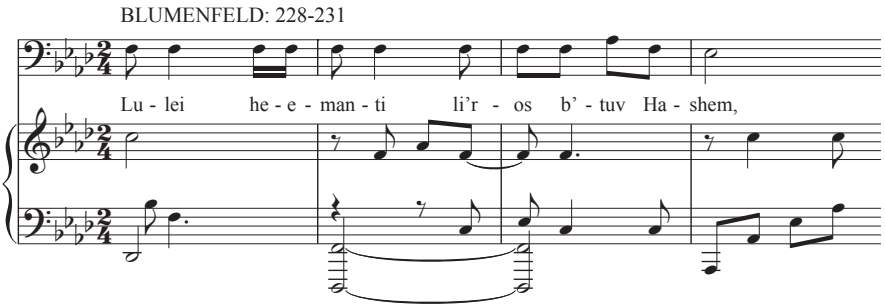
5 Salomon Sulzer, *Schir Zion II* (Vienna 1865), Joseph Sulzer, ed. (Vienna 1905, republished in Frankfurt am Main: J. Kaufmann), 3rd edition, 1922, no. 249.

European—particularly Hasidic—usage. This is evidenced by a prayer chant for *M'-Khalkeil Hayyim* ("Who Sustains the Living") that was discovered by composer Lazare Saminsky during an ethnographic expedition from St. Petersburg, Russia to the old communities of Georgian Jews living in the Caucasus Mountains in 1913 (**Example 7**).[6]



Example 7. ***Cadential descent to natural-minor subtonic****, as sung in prayer by the Jews of Georgia in the Caucasus.*

Blumenfeld adopts the above cadential pattern to open the concluding verse of Psalm 27, at the words *Lulei he'emanti lir'os b'-tuv HaShem* ("Yet I believe that I shall surely see God's goodness"; measures 228-231, **Example 8**).



Example 8. *Blumenfeld's use of the Georgian cadential pattern for the* ***closing section*** *of Psalm 27.*

In sum, we face a quandary in recommending this undeniably moving but overlong psalm setting written in a basic ABA sonata form. Its powerful B section, raised a half-tone for brilliance, is not long enough (only 20 out of 247 measures) to make a significant difference if cut. Moreover, its absence would weaken the overall musical structure—removing a brightly contrast-

6 Lazar Saminsky, *A Song Treasury of Old Israel* (New York: Bloch), 1951: 1.

ing episode while damping the re-entry of section A material just before the piece's close in Georgian style.

Like many synagogue classics of the past, this potential staple of the modern American repertoire, though beautifully and lovingly crafted, does not quite meet the expectations of 21st-century reality. Its melodic underpinning, though stemming from universal Jewish practice, is no longer recognizable to Jews who are disconnected from their biblical and liturgical heritage. For the persuasive power of its music to win this setting the audience it deserves, the composer might have to reduce its current length by half.

The complete cycle of Aaron Blumenfeld's ***Twelve Psalm Settings for Baritone and Piano*** *is available from the composer: aaronblumenfeld@att.net.*

Penitential Torah Reading in Ashkenazic Practice

Gleaned from many sources

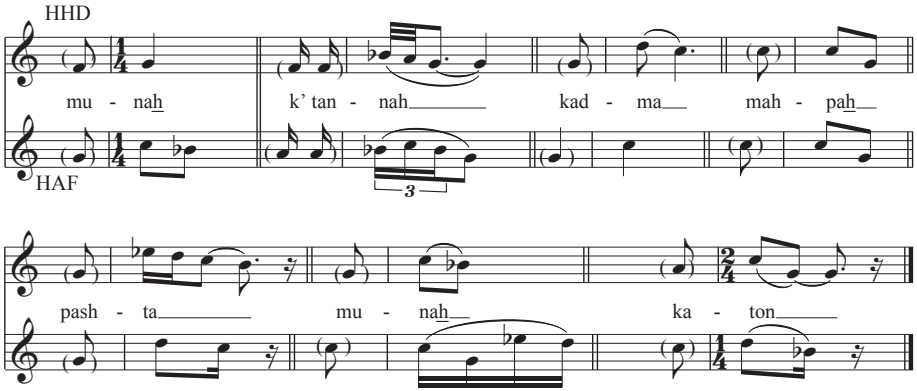
Among Jewish communities, Ashkenazim are the exception in having a special musical mode for reading Torah on the High Holidays. All other rites read it in the same mode as is used during the year. The reason, according to pioneering Jewish musicologist Abraham Idelsohn,[1] may stem from a commentary in the *Zohar* (mystical Book of Splendor, 13th century), on Leviticus chapter 16, the reading for Yom Kippur morning: When the sudden death of Aaron's sons, Nadav and Avihu, is read aloud on Yom Kippur, everyone should shed tears; and whoever expresses sorrow over the death of Aaron's children may be sure that his own children will not die in his lifetime.

Following this statement, argues Idelsohn, old Ashkenazic mahzorim like the one published in Salonica in 1550, instructed that this Torah portion be chanted in a tune that reflects sadness. The search for such sorrowful music led to the mode in which Sephardim chant the Book of Job on the fast of Tishah B'Av. Ashkenazim did not have that custom, but found that the Sephardic melody for reading Job suited the *Zohar*'s requirement for reading Torah on Yom Kippur. Later they extended its use to Rosh HaShanah as well.

In Eastern Europe, where the so-called "Lithuanian" tradition propogated by followers of the Vilna Gaon (Elijah ben Solomon Zalman, 1720-1797) prevailed, High Holiday Torah reading took on a sound akin to that of Haftarah reading. We see this kinship in a comparative chart compiled by researcher Salomon Rosowsky in the 1950s, of Penitential Torah and year-round Haftarah neume motifs for the zakef-katon group of *t'amim* (**Example 1.**).[2]

1 Abraham Z, Idelsohn, *Jewish Music* (New York: Henry Holt), 1929: 57.

2 Salomon Rosowsky, classroom material from course in Cantillation according to Lithuanian Tradition (New York: Cantors Institute at the Jewish Theological Seminary), 1956-57.



Example 1. *Eastern European (Lithuanian)* ***zakef-katon*** *group comparing High Holy Day Torah and year-round Haftarah cantillation.*

In Western Europe, Ashkenazic Torah reading on the High Holy Days more closely resembled a Students' Cantillation (*Stubentrop*) that had arguably survived from the Talmudic age to the 20th century, according to the *Jewish Encyclopedia*.[3]

> But it was never so developed for the small audience in the house of study as was the scriptural cantillation for the larger congregation in the house of prayer… Examples are referred to by the Tosafists… and an accentuated copy of the Mishnah was processed by Joseph Solomon Megiddo in the 17th century. Indeed, one treatise of the Mishnah was printed with accents as late as 1533. The oldest extant manuscript of the Talmud, a fragment of *K'ritot*, is marked with accents for the students' cantillation, and can be examined in the facsimile published in Singer and Schechter's "Rabbinical Fragments."

Based on a remark in the Maharil, [4] who according to Idelsohn,[5] "saved the integrity of the synagogue's ritual and music by sanctioning the old tunes," other historians have posited that in 14th-and-15th-century Germany, Jewish school children would chant Scripture for their teacher in a mode similar to

3 Francis L. Cohen, s.v. "Cantillation," *Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. III (New York: Funk & Wagnalls), 1903: 548. Charles Heller notes that *Stubentrop* actually means "school-room cantillation" (*What to Listen for in Jewish Music*, Toronto: Ecanthus Press, 2006: 101).

4 Maharil (Moreinu Ha-Rav Ya'akov Levi, 1356-1427), leading halakhic authority of his time in German-speaking lands, *Hilkhot Yom Kippur.*

5 Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 1929: 177f.

the one used in synagogue on the High Holy Days.[6] To identify that mode—the *Stubentrop*— even in a simplified student-type formulation—we must turn to a rabidly anti-Jewish book, *The Heilek* (referring to a section of BT Tractate *Sanhedrin*) written by the apostate, Gerson of Halberstadt, who died in 1627. He parodies the *Stubentrop* by placing it in the mouths of a lady fishmonger and her customer haggling over price (**Example 2**.)[7]

Customer: Madam, how much for the herring?

Fishmonger: You may have it for three cents.

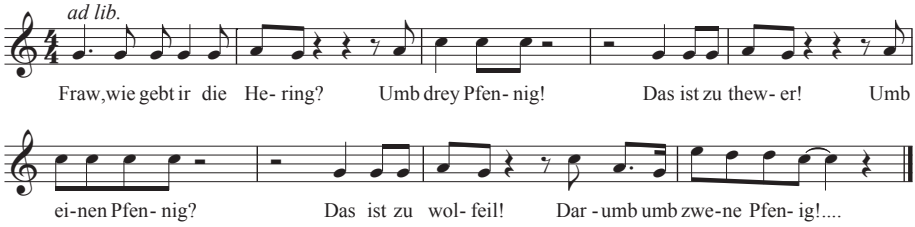
Customer: That's too expensive!

Fishmonger: How about one cent?

Customer: That's too cheap!

Fishmonger: In that case you may pay twenty cents.

The frivolous cynicism of this mock-verbal exchange belies the underlying majesty of the underlying mode as it was used in synagogues on the holiest days of the Jewish year.



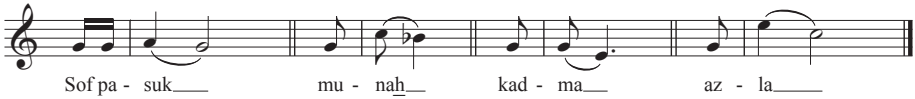
Example 2. *Students' mode (**Stubentrop**)—normally used when chanting Scripture in medieval German Jewish classrooms, parodied as a tool for haggling over fish prices.*

Although Gerson of Halberstadt never intended the above parody to be helpful to his former coreligionists, it is instructive to isolate from it the four

6 Abraham Berliner, *Aus dem Leben der deutsche Juden in Mittlelalter*, 2nd edition (Berlin), 1900: 56.

7 Cited in Eric Werner, *A Voice Still Heard—The Sacred Songs of the Ashkenazic Jews* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press), 1976: 78.

Stubentrop motifs that play a prominent role in the Western European tradition of Ashkenazic Penitential Torah reading (**Example 3.**).[8]



Example 3. *Four **Stubentrop motifs** prominent in Western Ashkenazic Penitential Torah reading.*

Based on the above four motifs—with allowance for personal variations—here are four motif groupings (alternately labeled "clauses") as they appear in the last verse (Genesis 22: 14) of portion number four—*r'vi'a*—from the Torah reading for the 2nd day of Rosh HaShanah—the Binding of Isaac:

darga-t'vir;

merkha-tipp'ha, munah-etnahta;

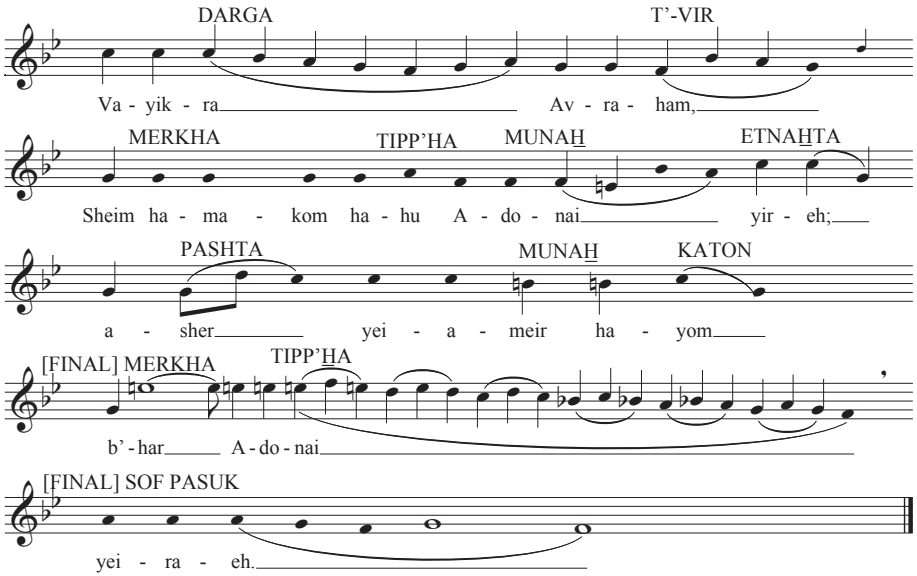
pashta, munah-katon;

[final] merkha-tipp'ha, merkha-sof-pasuk;

The Western Ashkenazic tradition presented here is that of the Copenhagen Synagogue, as transcribed from the recording of an actual reading on September 2, 1969 (**Example 4.**).[9]

8 Abba Yosef Weisgal, "Ta'amei ha-Torah l'-Yamim Nora'im," in *Emunat Abba*, transcribed and edited by Joseph A. Levine, 25th Anniversary Edition (New York: The Cantors Assembly), 2006: 30-31.

9 Jane Mink Rossen & Uri Sharvit. *A Fusion of Traditions—Liturgical Music in the Copenhagen Synagogue* (University Press of Southern Denmark), 2006: 147; Torah reader: J. Kaminkowitz.



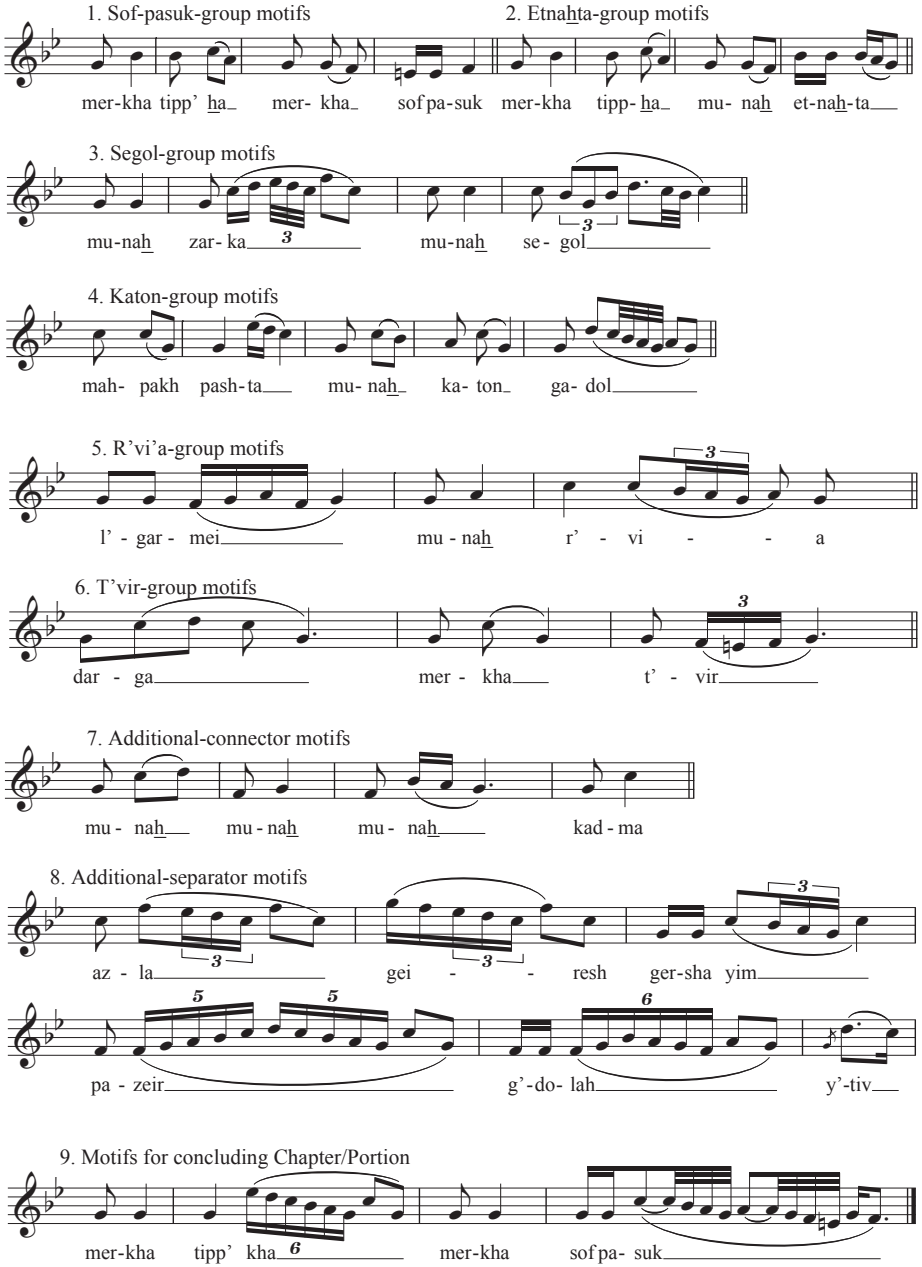
Example 4. ***Motif groups from*** *a Western Ashkenazic Penitential Torah reading, as performed in* ***the Copenhagen Synagogue****, 2nd day of Rosh HaShanah 1969.*

Musicologist Eric Werner[10] agrees that a definite relationship exists between the *Stubentrop* and Ashkenazic Penitential cantillation. The question in the United States remains: which version of that cantillation shall one use? Unlike English Jewry, which still retains Western Ashkenazic Torah and Haftarah reading throughout the year,[11] American Jews of every denomination have become thoroughly accustomed to the Lithuanian style of cantillation. It would be futile to attempt swimming against this established current. We therefore chart nine clauses of Penitential Torah neume motifs that reflect Eastern Ashkenazic, i.e. Lithuanian, practice (**Example 5.**).[12]

10 Eric Werner, *A Voice Still Heard*, 1976: 77.

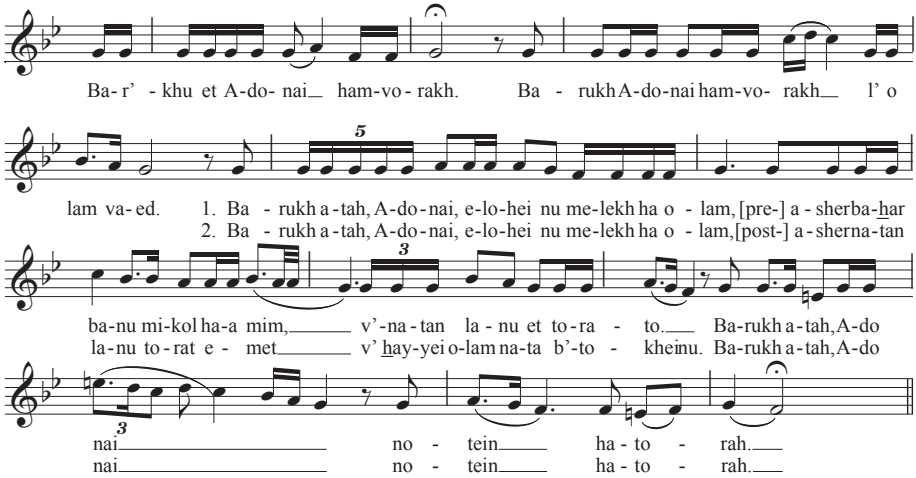
11 Victor Tunkel. *The Music of the Hebrew Bible* (London: Tymster Publishing), 2006: 9-11.

12 Salomon Rosowsky, 1958, in Joseph A. Levine, *Synagogue Song in America* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson), 2001: 208-211, line III throughout.



Example 5. *Eastern Ashkenazic (**Lithuanian**) Penitential Torah-reading clauses.*

The blessings recited before and after every Torah portion read during the High Holy Day Morning services are generally a *blend* of Eastern and Western Ashkenazic Torah-reading tradition. This is verified by the habitual practice of Hazzan Abba Yosef Weisgal (1885-1989), who had encountered this fusion as a student in Vienna and refined it over the next 70 years in the only two cantorial positions he occupied: Ivancice, Czechoslovakia; and the Chizuk Amuno Congregation in Baltimore, Maryland (**Example 6.**).[13]

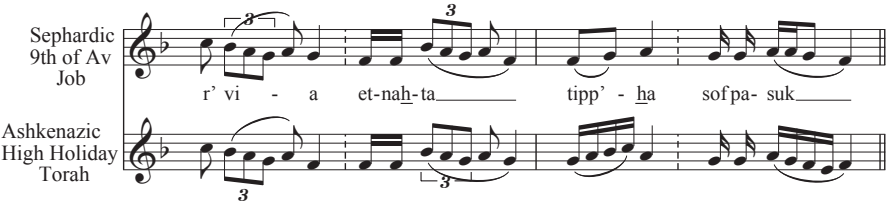


Example 6. ***Penitential Torah Blessings****, blending elements from Eastern and Western Ashkenazic traditions.*

Abraham Idelsohn studied public reading of the Book of Job among the Jews of Syria, Iran, Iraq, Morocco and Italy, as well as among the Sephardic Jews of London and Amsterdam. He found that of Job's 1,070 verses, only 24 contain more than two hemistichs. He concluded that it was the reason for an essentially *binary* pattern in which all those communities chanted the Book of Job on the fast of Tish'ah B'Av (9th of Av). In charting a composite "Sephardic" (i. e., Middle Eastern) cantillation for Job, Idelsohn noted how closely the melody's contour matched that of Ashkenazic Torah reading on the High Holy Days (**Example 7.**).[14]

13 *Emunat Abba*, op. cit., p. 33.

14 Abraham Z. Idelsohn, *Tol'dot ha-N'ginah ha-Ivrit* (Tel-Aviv: P. Naidt), 1924: 210-217.



Example 7. *Idelsohn's comparison of Sephardic reading of the* ***Book of Job*** *on the fast of Tish'ah B'Av, and Ashkenazic Torah reading on the High Holy Days.*

From the widespread diffusion of this unique chant pattern among such disparate groups, Idelsohn hypothesized that

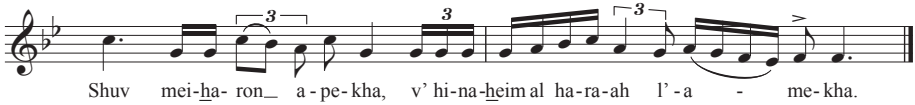
> the various *nus'ha'ot* (prescribed modes for singing sacred texts on specific liturgical occasions) are ancient folk heritages that live through their continuous common usage by the people, and not necessarily by virtue of their connection with particular texts. It was not the texts that gave rise to the motives that *hazzanim* and *ba'alei t'fillah* fit to those texts which made them come alive… So it was with the Ashkenazic nusah for reading Torah on *Yamim Nora'im*. We found the following instruction in an Ashkenazic mahzor from Salonica, 1550. "On Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur the Torah must be read in a low tune, as if one is groaning. "In other words, it is not to be read in the regular mode that is used all year. I have seen the same instruction in old Ashkenazic mahzorim from Cremona and Venice… I have not found it in any other Ashkenazic mahzorim.

From this evidence Idelsohn surmised that the custom had originated among Ashkenazim who fled to Italy and the Balkans between the 14th and 17th centuries following persecutions in Germany. As stated earlier, he saw its origins in the *Zohar* on Leviticus 16, the chapter read on Yom Kippur, which opens with the death of Aaron's two sons, Nadav and Avihu. This narration should be accompanied by the weeping of worshipers. And because the type of tune that causes such weeping is mentioned only in Ashkenazic mahzorim from Italy and the Balkans, Idelsohn assumes the newcomers from Western Europe first heard it on their arrival when worshiping in the local synagogues when Job was read aloud.

Moreover, the special Torah portion (Exodus 32: 12) read on every fast day during Shaharit and on Tish'ah B'av during Minhah, features a congregational response—

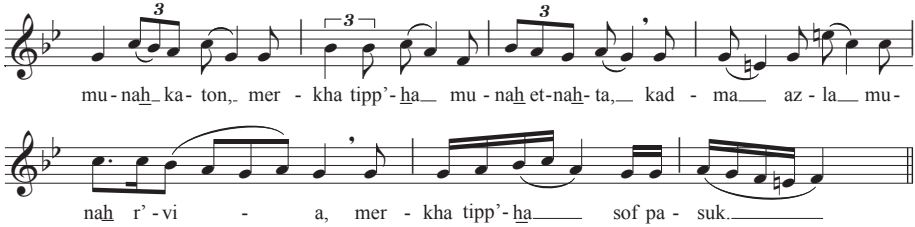
> *Shuv mei-haron apekha n'-hinaheim al ha-ra'ah l'-amekha*
>
> [O God,] turn from Your fierce wrath,
>
> and repent of this evil against Your people!—

sung to the nusah of High Holy Day Torah reading (**Example 8.**).[15]



Example 8. ***Congregational response*** *during Torah reading for Shaharit of fast days and Minhah of Tish'ah B'Av, sung in the nusah of Penitential Torah reading.*

Western European Jews who had migrated to Italy and the Balkans all joined in at moments like this, and soon adopted both the custom and the melody from the Middle Easterners already settled in those communities. Although both the Book-of-Job reading and the fast-day response pattern were new to the ears of immigrants from Western Ashkenaz (the Book was never read publicly there), their motivic groupings meshed seamlessly with the *Stubentrop* chant that the Rhinelanders had brought with them for learning. When combined, the Eastern and Western *nus'ha'ot* formed a mode that perfectly suited the requirements of Penitential Torah reading—a tune expressive of sadness, suffering and contrition (**Example 9.**).



Example 9. *A* ***fusion*** *of Eastern and Western Ashkenazic Penitential Torah reading.*

15 Yehoshua L. Ne'eman, *Ts'lilei ha-Mikra*, vol. I (Tel-Aviv: P. Naidt), 1956: 128.

Salomon Rosowsky (1878-1962), first instructor of Cantillation
at the Cantors Institue
Sketch by Joseph Levine, 1956

Subject: Future of the Feher Jewish Music Center
January 10, 2008

The Director of Beth Hatefutsoth Museum, Tel Aviv, has recently announced that my work as Director of the Feher Jewish Music Center will be terminated on March 31, 2008 "due to budgetary constraints." The Feher has been a one-man department since its establishment some 25 years ago by musicologist Dr. Avner Bahat. Therefore, firing me has obvious implications; continuation of the Center's preservation and dissemination activities are acutely endangered. I warmly thank the Journal's readers for their support.

Juval Shaked

bhjewmus@post.tau.ac.il

Subject: The Khazntes
March 9, 2007

Re Arianne Slack Brown's wonderful article about the lives of six Khazntes… I never could enjoy listening to some of the people featured—though empathizing with them: it always sounded to me like women in drag. But the article gave me a genuine respect for them. I'd like to have known about their training. Sheindele, who transcribed that Hershman selection (*B'rokho fun Hallel* by Rapaport) must have been quite a musician. I've heard the recording and it looks like the notation does it justice.

Gershon Freidlin

Pittsburgh

Subject: Perele Feig, an Unsung European *Khaznte*, Israeli Hazzaniyot
August 27, 2007

Re: the uncannily masculine sound of Perele Feig's hazzanut, fifty years ago the radio station Kol Yisrael received an LP recording titled *Cantorial Masterpieces*. The jacket contained the name Perele Feig, but included no photo nor any biographical information. The programmers therefore assumed the name Perele was a misspelling. Before airing the selection singled out for mention in Arianne Slack Brown's *JSM* 2007 article, the announcer said:

"And now you are about to hear the prayer, *Tiheir Rabi Yishma'eil Atsmo*, composed by Zevulon Kwartin and sung by Cantor **B**erele Feig." I've since discovered, on the Internet, that Perele was accompanied on that recording by her brother, pianist Yoel Feig.

As for *khanzntes* in Europe, Nobel Prize-wining author S. Y. Agnon wrote (in *Ir U-M'lo'ah*, pp. 71-79) that in his hometown of Buczacz in Eastern Galicia—now part of Ukraine and Belarus—the wife of their cantor, Rav Eliyah, used to write compositions that her husband incorporated regularly in his daven'n. Her father, Rav Nisan the hazzan of Monostritch, had named her aptly: Miriam D'vorah, after two biblical women closely connected with our people's song. The lone survivor of all her parents' sons and daughters—the rest had died in early childhood—she inherited all of her father's vocal and musical talent. Her compositions included *matbei'a* prayers as well as *piyyutim*, the most notable of which was a *k'rovah* for *Parashat Ha-Hodesh*. None of them were ever used for the synagogue service, because the way they were written purportedly revealed "the voice of a woman." Her children all learned *ta'amei ha-Mikra* from her, yet she suffered lifelong depression over the rejection of her music. At her premature death it was discovered that she wore a *tallit katan* under her outer clothing.

It was said that she donned *t'fillin* every morning and that her husband never objected. In fact, he ordered the following epithet to be engraved on her headstone:

> *A God-fearing woman, she shall be praised.*
> *As a master of prayer and liturgical poetry*
> *She was undoubtedly the equal of any man.*

Concerning a recent phenomenon on the local cantorial scene, women are now appearing before the public, bearing the title "Hazzan" (or, to be precise, "Hazzanit"). Formerly, we Israelis were used to hearing women perform hazzanic selections in concert, but now things have changed. At a recent Klezmer festival in Tsfat, four women "Hazzaniyot" were billed: Adi Arad, Naomi Teplow, Rachel Vilner and Hagit Kfir. The first three belong to the Reform and Conservative movements, while the last named identifies with Orthodoxy. All have beautiful voices, but not everything written for hazzanim works equally well for their female counterparts. Still, I note that women students outnumber men at the School of Sacred Music and the H. L. Miller Cantorial School. It seems, therefore, that women cantors are here to stay. One may like or dislike the idea, but one can no longer ignore this fact of life.

Akiva Zimmermann

Tel-Aviv

Subject: Sephardi Influences on Ashkenazic Liturgy in London
February 16, 2008

Re Naomi Cohn Zentner's article that appeared in JSM 2007, in my Youth Minyan in Manchester, which included a lot of Sephardi boys, we had the custom of mixing the nusah depending on who was doing which bit of the service. However, a few things were fixed tune-wise, and *Az YaShir* was sung to the Sephardi melody every Shabbat morning in P'sukei DeZimra. (I was there only every fortnight because the choir in South Manchester Main Shul operated every other week and had prior call on my loyalty.) Incidentally, their "whole-paragraph" chanting had a major effect on Sephardi families' knowledge of the prayers: thorough and by heart; especially long texts like *Nishmat*, *U-Va LeTziyon*, etc. The Sephardim in South Manchester also used the *Az YaShir* tune in Hallel for the paragraph *Min HaMeitsar*.

David Prager

London

Subject: Launching the European Academy for Jewish Liturgy (EAJL)
November 26, 2007

With help from the Cantors Assembly, and working on the premise that in the future, Jewish prayer outside the USA will be lay-led, EAJL provides mentoring to aspiring leaders on a one-to-one basis, wherever they live, through instant audio-visual broadband communication media like Skype or MSN that cost little or nothing. It is not intended to replace formal full-time cantorial training.

The Cantors Assembly has agreed to find professional hazzanic mentors amongst its members. Students learn whatever units they need (for example, Ma'ariv l'-Hol at a Shiva minyan) in whatever language they choose and according to whichever tradition they need. Already, three students from France, one from the UK, and one from Spain have entered the process and been matched with mentors.

EAJL was launched in November 2007 with a hazzanic seminar at the inaugural conference of Masorti Europe, in Paris. This was followed by a major concert in London featuring Hazzan Sol Zim, 70 children from British Jewish Primary Schools and a combined adult choir trained by the fine UK musician, Joseph Finlay. Hazzan Zim then led a 2-day seminar at London University

on the nusah of Shabbat and how to involve congregations in prayer. The London programs, sponsored by the Jewish Music Institute and attended by 60 people from different European countries, culminated in a reception at the British House of Commons.

The Cantors Assembly was represented by its immediate past president, Hazzan Steven Stoehr, who led a workshop at London University and spoke at the concert and reception.

The profile of the cantorate in the UK is not a positive one. What few cantors there are, function mainly in Orthodox (the British United Synagogue) shuls, and only one of them in London holds a full time position. The Masorti movement boasts only two hazzanim and one new student who is preparing to enter cantorial school at Boston Hebrew College this year. There are no cantors as yet in Reform synagogues although one student in her fourth year at HUC's School of Sacred Music in New York is expected to return to the UK once she graduates.

That is why synagogue services in the UK are often led with mediocrity and no understanding of *nusah ha-t'fillah*. There is an urgent need to inspire and teach capable lay people. Our rabbis and synagogue officials must be helped to realize how necessary it is to produce leaders of prayer who are on their own spiritual journeys so that they can enable their congregants to participate with devotion. It's a huge challenge, and as Director of the EAJL, I thank the CA for its invaluable help and invite JSM readers to seek further information at www.eajl.org.

Jaclyn Chernett

London

Subject: Music of the French Synagogue

November 5, 2007

As a trained musician (cello) and an American who happened to be in Paris over Yamim Nora'im I dropped into the Grande Synagogue on rue de la Victoire to see if anything remained of the noble French tradition that prevailed between the World Wars. I own an LP recording of services as performed at the same locale under the direction of Léon Algazi in 1939, and hoped to hear some of the same music. I did, with some notable differences.

The pipe organ and large mixed choir (I recall seeing on the liner notes of a recently released CD that there had been 36 choristers right after WW II) were now replaced by twelve men singing mostly in unison. Only half of

them wore *talleisim*, which led some of the congregation (myself included) to suspect that the others were non-Jews.

The repertoire—as arranged by Samuel David in 1895 and reduced to a solo voice by Jules Franck in 1920—remained intact but was sung by a seriously out-of-tune cantor and choir seemingly out of touch with the 300 worshipers' needs; every opportunity to involve them was missed through poor musical arrangements. Israel Goldfarb's *Areshet S'fateinu* (a later addition, obviously) fell under this heading. Other moments that we have come to recognize as congregational in the U. S. were rushed through by the cantor in an unrecognizable key or mode. These included the Four Mei'ein Zikhronot: *Zokhreinu L'-Hayyim; Mi Khamokha Av Ha-Rahamim; U-Kh'tov L'-Hayyim; and B'-Seifer Hayyim*. Old chorales like Samuel Naumbourg's *B'-Rosh HaShanah* were so drawn out and quirkily phrased that no one could sing along even if they wanted to.

Which brings me to the congregation itself, mostly old timers in the Main Sanctuary—a domed cathedral with magnificent stained-glass windows and 100-foot-high ceiling—and mostly young marrieds with small children in three other minyanim scattered in various halls around the vast premises, that sang refrains familiar to us (*V'-Ha'eir Eineinu*). In the main service, ninety percent of the worshipers didn't daven at all. As if to compensate, the remaining ten percent hopped up and down three times at *Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh*. Strangely, at least to this observer who's used to seeing only the cantor prostrate himself at the Great *Aleinu* of the Amidah repetition back home, ninety percent of the men fell *kor'im*.

That alone convinced me that a Jewish heart still beats in these beleagured co-religionists of ours, many of whom now walk to shul wearing black baseball caps instead of yarmulkes in hopes of escaping recognition as Jews by mischief-bound Muslims.

Arthur Bergen

Paris

Subject: Comments on Jewish Life in Germany

May 1, 2007

The Jewish community structure in Germany is quite different from that in the United States, where each congregation is autonomous and may choose to join a movement or not. The national movements are supported by congregations, and the congregations are supported by congregants. In other

words, the community is built from the bottom up. Displeased members are free to join a competing congregation in the same market, or even to found a new congregation.

In Germany, community structure is built from the top down. The Central Council of Jews in Germany distributes funds to each of the State Synagogue Associations—Germany has 16 states—and each Association distributes funding to the synagogues in its own state. I once officiated in a congregation during a Shabbat program, sponsored by the German government, and designed to show off modern Germany to American Jewish college students. I called a woman to the Torah. During the next aliyah, as the woman still stood by the shulhan, the president of the congregation walked in. He sent a messenger to tell me *not to do anything further with women.* After the service, he explained why. He himself was not against women, but feared that somebody might indiscreetly mention the incident in public. If word got back to the State Synagogue Association, he could lose his funding.

The bureaucracy is such that when the Jewish community of Schleswig-Holstein became independent from the Jewish Community of Hamburg, one of the first things they did was establish their own State Synagogue Association even though there were only two synagogues in the entire state. The Hamburg Community didn't allow them to call the synagogue in Kiel a "synagogue" and in fact, if you called Kiel on the telephone they answered, "Jewish Community of Hamburg, Service Center Kiel."

Funding comes from the Government at the national or municipal level. Working people have a Church tax deducted from their pay and sent directly to the local synagogue. Everyone in Germany must register his address, and the form has a space for religion. Filling it in is optional, but if you tell them you're Jewish, they automatically sign you up as a member of the local Jewish community. It doesn't matter if you live in a part of town that is nearer to the synagogue in the next municipality, or if you don't like the local synagogue. Of course nobody can force you to *attend* a synagogue you don't like or stop you from attending somewhere else, but you are not free to join the synagogue of your choice if you happen to live in the wrong place. If you try to found your own synagogue, which is possible, it will not be recognized as a community, but as a "club" and will most likely not receive funding.

Most synagogues are classified as a "Unity Community." Before the war, this meant that all synagogues in a city would share the same administration. A Berliner, for example, would become a member of the Jewish Community of Berlin, and could then attend the synagogue of his choice. Due to the current reduced Jewish population in Germany—

compared to pre-war levels—there are very few cities with real Unity Communities that offer a variety of worship opportunities.

In most cities, politically conservative State Synagogue Associations or lay leaders who are neither informed about nor interested in religion lead to the perpetuation of "Non-practicing Orthodoxy," which essentially means that the synagogue building must be considered Orthodox even if there are no Orthodox Jews around. In other words, "Orthodox" is authentic and is good; "Liberal" Judaism is often referred to as if it were a disease. No one distinguishes between Conservative and Reform, and hardly anyone knows or wants to know the distinction. By "Liberal" most people mean "non-religious."

To be sure, there are some Reform congregations, mostly belonging to the World Union for Progressive Judaism. There have been great tensions between these groups and the Unity Communities, due to ideology and money. Masorti has an office in Berlin, and of the four congregations that could qualify as Conservative, three are officially recognized, but only one holds weekly services.

The German Rabbinical Association is divided into two parts, the Orthodox and the General Rabbinical Association. The latter, of which I am a founding member, includes the whole spectrum of non-Orthodox Judaism. Theoretically, every member congregation of the Central Council of Jews in Germany is required to accept as a member anyone who moves into its jurisdiction who had formerly belonged to another member congregation.

The biggest problem for religion in Germany is apathy. Synagogue attendance is no better than church attendance, and Catholic as well as Protestant churches are being closed or are merging. If synagogues are being built, as they indeed are with much publicity, it is because *Judaism is politically correct*, and every city in Germany wants to be seen as supporting the Jews. It makes no difference if the new building remains empty or if the money for building or maintenance would be better spent on a rabbi or teacher.

Germany had 30,000 Jews in 1989 when the Berlin Wall came down (on Nov. 9, the 49th anniversary of Kristallnacht). Today there are between 100,000 and 200,000 Jews. The growth is through immigration from the former Soviet Union. Some congregations are 100% Russian, others only 95%. This enormous majority has no background in either Judaism or democracy, and no vision of what a synagogue potentially could be. Despite their numbers, the Russians have no power in many communities. Many of them are not halakhically Jewish and there are many stories of Soviet anti-Semites who have suddenly showed up in Germany as "Jews."

The number of immigrants creates enormous practical problems, with which the Jewish community cannot cope adequately. On top of this, many of the German Jewish lay leaders are more interested in holding on to their own power for as long as possible rather than in helping the Russians to integrate and to take on leadership roles. Many of the Russians are interested in the synagogue only for the social services that it provides. A Russian-speaking social worker is often more in demand than a German-speaking rabbi, and synagogue presidents have been known to instruct their rabbis not to try to learn some Russian.

The paradox is that without Soviet immigration, there would barely be a German Jewish community today.

Daniel S. Katz

Duisburg

Subject: Sh'ki'at ha-hammah in the Land of the Midnight Sun
June 7, 2007

I believe your readers will be interested in a question that I fielded during a recent Jewish Heritage tour to the Grand Choral Synagogue of St. Petersburg where I serve as cantor. I was describing how our Shabbat Morning service regularly draws over 200 worshipers when someone called out: "How do you know when to daven Ma'ariv on Friday night?" Luckily for me, that issue had already been resolved by our rabbi, Menachem Mendel Pewzner. He set the time for Kabbalat Shabbat at 9 P.M. during the Summer months because if we waited for it to actually get dark it could take until 1:30 in the morning and we would not want to keep the children up that late. As for making Havdalah on Saturday night, that's no problem, since halakhically, if one has forgotten to recite the HaMavdil blessing, one can still do so until Tuesday night.

Incidentally, I am privileged to follow in the footsteps of such giants as Zavel Kwartin and Pierre Pinchik, who served as Chief Cantors of this synagogue in 1908-1909 and 1920-1925, respectively. In deference to their legacy our Shabbat and Yom Tov services are accompanied by a male choir whose repertoire still includes such standards as Dunajewsky's *Ein Komokho* and Lewandowsky's *Uv'-Nuho Yomar*. To ensure that people pay attention to *K'dushah* and *Hazarat ha-Shats*, our Lubavitch-trained rabbi has posted a Lu'ah titled *Shulhan Orukh HaRav* in which the late Rebbe spelled out what is expected of the congregation: to refrain from any activity—including learning—that would distract them from hearing and responding to every blessing uttered by the hazzan.

In other words, we are a thriving community who look forward to greeting our American cousins whenever they are able to visit us.

Gregory Yeckerson

St. Petersburg, Russia

Shulhan Arukh HaRav, Grand Choral Synagogue, St. Petersburg, Russia: "When the *Sh'li'ah Tsibbur* repeats the *Amidah*, the congregation should silently focus on each *B'rachah*... and refrain from any other activity—including learning— during the *Hazarat HaSha"Ts*...

Notes on the History and Origins of the Music of the Anglo-Jewish Synagogue Tradition

Daniel Tunkel

Origins of the Ashkenazi Community in London and the Great Synagogue

The Jews were readmitted to England in 1656. Actually, what happened was less a formal act of readmission and grand acceptance, and more of an acquiescence by the regime of Oliver Cromwell that no basis could be found in law that prohibited the (re)settlement of the community nationally expelled by King Edward I in 1290.

The first Jews to return under this process were members of the Portuguese Community of Amsterdam, who within a few years had established for themselves a synagogue in Creechurch Lane in the City of London. That building was replaced in 1701 by the Bevis Marks Synagogue.[1]

Ashkenazi Jews followed their Sephardi brethren by the end of the 17th century, coming mostly from Hamburg and other parts of North Germany. Circumstantial evidence of an organized synagogue goes back to about 1690.[2] The fragmentary records from this period disclose the first Hazzan was one Rabbi Judah Leib ben Moses of Lissa, though nothing is known of his musicianship.

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1 Following the April 1993 IRA bomb in Bishopsgate, which destroyed a 15th-century church, Bevis Marks Synagogue now holds the distinction of being the oldest building in the City of London used every day for statutory religious worship.

2 A diary kept by a Presbyterian minister from Scotland of the religious buildings he found in the City of London on his visit in 1689-90 attests to three Jewish Synagogues, without being specific as to denomination. One was most probably Ashkenazi. Evidence of communal organisation from the 1690s includes the constitution of a *hevra kadisha* separate from that of the Sephardi Community's in 1695 and the acquisition of the first communal cemetery, at Alderney Road, in 1692-3.

The first purpose-built synagogue was erected in 1722 under the patronage of Moses Hart, though this was replaced in 1764 and again completely remodelled in 1790 (an interior scene from 1809 is pictured left). It attracted the name of "The Great Synagogue" by the middle of the 18th Century to differentiate it from a breakaway congregation at the Hambro Synagogue[3] and, later, the New Synagogue[4] (these three being in effect London's Ashkenazi centres of worship right up to mid-Victorian times).

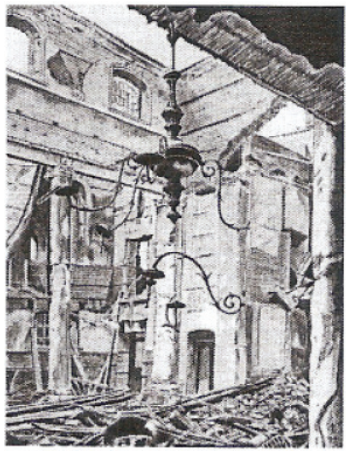
Not surprisingly, the Great was very much the cradle of Anglo-Jewish synagogue music, and (with the broad exception of the United States) its musical traditions have penetrated a large part of the English-speaking Jewish world. The Great Synagogue was severely damaged by bombing during the "Blitz" in May 1941 (pictured on the next page, after the attack), and although it continued to be used as a synagogue for certain purposes for three or four more years, the decision was taken after World War II that reparation money for damaged or destroyed communal buildings should in this case not be used to rebuild it (the community that supported having essentially long since moved on or been displaced). Hence the site was demolished and redeveloped and all that remains today is a short stretch of the original outer wall in Duke's Place, Aldgate, with a (frankly, rather illegible) plaque that tells a very little of the history of the place and nothing at all of its having been the cradle of a very substantial musical tradition.

Jewish settlement, of course, spread throughout the British Isles. With the advent of the choral synagogue tradition, pioneered in Vienna in the 1820s by Salomon Sulzer and introduced into the Great Synagogue formally in 1841, communities around the country built synagogues for themselves

3 Founded 1707-8. There is a long and involved history to its formation, in effect as a schism from the main Ashkenazi community, and it seems to have acquired the "Hambro" nickname on account of the patronage of Hamburg Jews by then living in London.

4 Founded in Leadenhall Street in the City of London in 1760, moved in 1838 to Great St. Helens, nearby, in 1838 and reconstructed in Egerton Road, Stamford Hill, in 1915. The building still exists, though is now not used for regular worship.

to accommodate cantors and choirs. Many, as buildings, still exist, though the choral and cantorial tradition outside of London (and, debatably, in London for the most part as well) is largely consigned to history.[5]



Three epochs

Anglo-Jewish Synagogue music divides into three broad periods, the Georgian, the Victorian and the Twentieth Century.

The Georgian era

The Great Synagogue's first musical flourishing was during the later 18th century. The first truly noteworthy Hazzan (referred to in the community by-laws as the Reader) was Isaac Polack (pictured left[6]), whose tenure from 1746 to 1802 is probably an Anglo-Jewish record.

Bits and pieces survive from the music of that era. The most notable survival is probably the best-known melody around the world for *Yigdal.* Most people will easily recognize this melody as it appears in *Kol Rinah V'Todah*,[7] but have inserted as well an altogether more interesting item of historical interest. The melody was made famous by one of the most celebrated of the Great Synagogue's musicians, one Meyer Leon Singer, who is better

5 I remember as a very young boy the Park Row Synagogue in Bristol had a *bimah* with a horse-shoe seating configuration at the rear. It never really occurred to me what this might have been for at the time, but on a visit years later, it was explained to me that this was a choir stall, and that the Synagogue had a choir in full service up to World War I and even occasionally thereafter.

6 The by-laws of the community were particularly strict about the Hazzan wearing canonicals at all material times.

7 Always fondly referred to as "The Blue Book", and treated—rightly or wrongly—as the authoritative compendium of choral music in the Anglo-Jewish Ashkenazi tradition. The Blue Book will be referred to further on in this summary, and by the way, for those interested the entire source can now be accessed as PDFs and sound files from the Internet at www.shulmusic.org.

known by the artificial Italianization of his name to "Leoni". Leoni was not the Hazzan; rather, he served as the "Meshorer", a tenor, who, together with the incumbent Hazzan (Polack, at the time) and a bass, would form an *ad hoc* trio that would offer improvisations on the Hazzan's efforts (and, occasionally, for example on Yom Kippur, take over from the Hazzan to afford him some rest). Leoni italianized his name to make more of an impression on the operatic stage. The Great Synagogue bound him in 1767 to a contract that prohibited his performance on the stage on Friday nights. But there was always a tension between this side of his career and his service to the community. He became so successful as an operatic singer and recitalist that Gentiles came to hear him in the synagogue itself. The tension between Leoni's two careers came to a head when he was reported to the Great Synagogue Council for having taken a part in Handel's "Messiah". He never performed at the Great again[8], and when his operatic career came to an end, he saw out his days in the musical service of the Jewish community of Kingston, Jamaica, where he died and was buried in 1796.

Leoni's *Yigdal* tune attracted some unusual admirers. Its adoption for the tune of the Christian hymn *The God of Abraham, Praise* may be attributable entirely to the visit to the Great of John Wesley and Thomas Olivers in 1770.[9] Mention should also be made of William Keith, organist from West Ham (in those days a small village well to the east of London—now long since overrun by the expansion of the city). Keith notated this and several other melodies and published them in 1780 under the title *The Airs Sung at the Jews Synagogue.* Keith's versions are instrumental reworkings, and although several melodies were notated and edited in this way, none but the *Yigdal* melody is recognizable today.[10] Keith's material has no words, other than designations in the music of when the "priest" (sic., referring to the Hazzan) and when Leoni, respectively, would sing. It is, in effect, the only contemporary source we have that gives us perhaps some idea of the style and pace of music of the Great Synagogue in the Georgian era.

One other Meshorer must be mentioned from this period, the even more illustrious John Braham. Leoni

8 The sources I have consulted do not say when this was, but presumably some point in the late 1780s.

9 Macy Nulman's *Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music* notes at p. 150 that the hymn text was created by Thomas Olivers in 1770.

10 At least, not yet. This may form a research project for somebody interested in gaining a greater understanding of the music of the Great in the Georgian era.

adopted him as a sort of family member and introduced him into the service of the Great in the 1780s. The picture on the previous page depicts Leoni and Braham in operatic costumes.

The epoch also includes one other curio, always affectionately known as *Byron's Hebrew Melodies.* Lord Byron, the leading English poet from the turn of the 19th century, wrote a number of verses in collaboration with Isaac Nathan (pictured right) then a leading figure in Jewish and general music, which he set, using melodies taken from (or adapted from) the liturgy of the Great Synagogue[11]. Of the 24 melodies, only a few have so far been identified, the others having ceased to be used in the services many years ago and which are therefore now impossible to place.

Two that are known are first of all a lilting melody for the *half-Kaddish* traditionally sung (even today) on Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot,[12] and a complicated A-B-C-D strophic tune for *Yigdal* (again!) which is still occasionally heard in England on Sukkot[13].

Down on the road from the Great Synagogue at Bevis Marks (pictured on the next page—this synagogue survived two World Wars and more recent terrorist events in the City, and is still very visitable), the Sephardi tradition had also developed a taste for more complex and structured music by this period. In 1931, the Bevis Marks Community published two volumes, bound as one and under the title of *Sephardi Melodies,* a substantial amount of choral material, some traditional and some composed or attributed. The first half derives from material arranged (and, in a few cases, composed) by David Aaron de Sola (pictured left), who served as both Rabbi and Hazzan 1815-60[14], and which replicates material published by de Sola

11 And that of Canterbury, where he grew up.

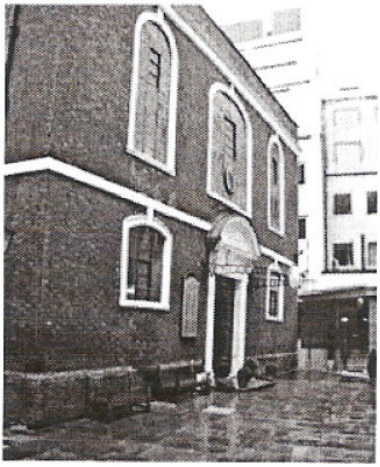
12 A piece which has been erroneously attributed by some to Julius Mombach, of whom more below, but which is clearly no more recent than Nathan's 1815 publication, and therefore most likely to be many years older.

13 In Mombach's music (which we shall see was published posthumously and with no great attention to detail), this piece also appears as claimed for him.

14 De Sola had a significant impact on Anglo-Jewish scholarship in general. Towards the end of his life, his publications included official translations into English of both the Sephardi and Ashkenazi siddur and festival prayerbooks, several volumes of the Mishnah, the Book of Genesis (intended as the first volume of the entire Tanakh but never completed) and numbers of historical and philosophical works to boot.

and Emanuel Aguilar originally in 1857. The second includes rather more material by de Sola and by Hakham Dr. Artom (perhaps one of the most musically gifted men to have reached a senior rabbinical position in any community). There are also published two versions of de Sola's most famous *Adon Olam* (he composed several). The better-known is that from *Kol Rinah V'Todah* (where the original was taken and rearranged/simplified for use in the Ashkenazi services, where it is still a firm favourite in the UK). But for a comparison, one might check the original version from Bevis Marks as well.

The Victorian era



Queen Victoria came to the throne as a young girl of 18 in 1837, and her reign of 64 years is the longest of any British monarch, before or since. This was a period which saw a significant change in the position of Britain's Jews. A community in the 18th and early 19th centuries that had been tolerated though hardly encouraged (and viewed with suspicion or even with xenophobic aggression at times of war) gradually acquired more rights for itself. Numbers of Jews (both of the patrician Sephardi community and the more recently settled Ashkenazi community) were able to enter public life and succeed in the arts, business, commerce, and even politics. Much of the Ashkenazi community had developed in the 18th and early 19th centuries from movement of Jews from Germany to Britain (until 1837, when the succession laws in the Electorate of Hannover prevented Queen Victoria from succeeding her uncle William IV to that position, Britain was in effect united with a large part of what is North Germany today[15]).

Towards the end of the Victorian era, the United Kingdom (especially London, but in good measure its other great cities and ports as well) found itself becoming home to a new Jewish immigration, from Poland, Lithuania and Russia.

15 Had there not been such a difference in succession laws, barring a female niece from succeeding in Germany in place of a remoter male relative, it is a matter for speculation just how different European history might have been in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The Victorian epoch as far as Anglo-Jewish music is concerned actually has its seeds in the end of the Georgian. In 1827, The Great Synagogue sought a new cantor, and appointed one Enoch Elias (or Eliasson),[16] who, as a condition of his appointment, was required to bring with him a boy singer.

He brought with him from Germany a youngster of 14 called Julius Lazarus (Israel Eliezer) Mombach (pictured left, in mature years, from the photo that is found in the preface to the posthumous publication of his music). Elias came from Darmstadt in Hesse, and Mombach from the smaller town of Pfungstadt, just to the south of Darmstadt. Interestingly, though Elias lasted two years in post (according to Cecil Roth's *History of the Great Synagogue* he neglected a chill that affected his voice; he remained in London as musical director of the Lyceum Theatre), Mombach stayed on at the Great.

The Great appointed Solomon Ascher of Groningen as its next cantor in 1832,[17] with Mombach alongside as Meshorer and a bass, making up the conventional trio, known as Jehiel of Hanau. Finally, in 1841, the trio was replaced with a proper choir, formed at the instigation of Henry Hyman Cohen and directed by Mombach himself.

We know less about Mombach than we probably ought to, considering the impact he made on the community. His marriage was childless and his wife predeceased him by 17 years. He published nothing in his lifetime, even though he seems to have been urged to do so. Within a year of his death, Moses Keizer[18] had rushed into print a volume entitled *Ne'im Zmiros Yisroel* and purporting to set down all of Mombach's compositions and arrangements. The two-page preface affords us the best (and that is a relative term) biographi-

16 Renton, *The Lost Synagogues of London* (Tymsder Publishing, 2000) names him as Binom Elias.

17 Roth, *History of the Great Synagogue* (out of print but available online at www.jewishgen.org/JCR-UK/susser/roth/chtwo.htm describes him as a "... fine, clear tenor, whose florid style of recitative with frequent roulades long remained a beloved memory with London Jews." Ascher remained in post to 1871.

18 Renton, *op.. cit.,* records him as the Hazzan Sheni of the Great Synagogue 1857-76.

cal data we have for Mombach. Nor is the music any more thorough: much of it is not Mombach's own even though it is implicitly or explicitly claimed for him; and more besides that *was* composed by Mombach was left out. In his 39 years as choirmaster at the Great (overlapping with a period where his services were sought simultaneously at the New Synagogue as well), he clearly attained institutional status.[19] Keizer's preface to *Ne'im Zmiros Yisroel* claims Mombach's music excelled all in standard except that of the iconic Sulzer, who was his equal.[20]

Marcus Hast,
le Vorsanger der Great Synagogue, London (1840-1911).

I would also like to mention two later arrivals on the London scene, Marcus Hast and Chaim Wasserzug. Hast (pictured left) was Polish-born, and had served as cantor in Warsaw and Breslau. He was apparently both a Talmudic scholar of note and a competent pianist/composer. Hast left us four volumes of his music, entitled *Seder Hoavodah,* published at various stages of his London career.[21] The preface to one of the later volumes claims for this publication a unique position in Synagogue music, although he was neither the first in Anglo-Jewry to publish in this way (Wasserzug, for one, preceded his publications—see below), and nor is his compositional style either strikingly original or apparently talented. Maybe that is a harsh judgment, but on balance, the better pieces of Hast have made it into *Kol Rinah V'Todah* (British Jews encounter examples constantly) but his volumes nowadays remain largely on the shelf rather then the music stand.

Wasserzug is somewhat similar. He was the son of a cantor from a small town in Western Poland. Written evidence (for he died before the recording age) suggests that he was one of the greatest singers from Mainland Europe of his generation. He spent 5 years as cantor in Lomza, near Warsaw (hence his other nickname, Chaim Lomzer), and introduced four-part choral sing-

19 Roth, *op. cit.,* informs that he would enter the Shabbat service at the Great during the reading of the Haftarah and the congregation would rise in his honour as he did so.

20 Roth, *op. cit.,* repeats this assertion. I am not sure what Lewandowski in Berlin and Naumbourg in Paris would have had to say concerning this suggestion; however, Sulzer, Lewandowski, Mombach and Naumbourg (probably in that order) rank as the foremost contributors to the mid-19th century synagogue music tradition, and far excel their respective contemporaries.

21 Hast served as Chief Hazzan at the Great from 1872 until his death in 1911. According to Renton, *op. cit.*, his musical offerings included two oratorios and a cantata, but no further information is provided.

ing there against fierce Hasidic opposition. He came to London to join other members of his family in the 1860s and served as the first cantor of the newly opened North London Synagogue (Lofting Road, Barnsbury, 1868). A rather nice engraving from *The Graphic* for 1872 pictures the scene on Sukkot at the North London Synagogue, and although there are no names of persons illustrated, the cantor figure in the top right hand corner of the picture must be Wasserzug. This is the only known image of him to survive. He published his life's music in 1878, and died rather suddenly in 1882, aged not quite 60.[22] Again, musically, his singing probably exceeded in quality his compositional style. The more memorable pieces of Wasserzug's have found their way into *Kol Rinah V'Todah.*

Outside of London the contribution of Abraham Saqui at the Prince's Road Synagogue in Liverpool is particularly noteworthy. And of equal importance musically were the efforts of Charles Kensington Salaman (pictured right) and his collaborators at the West London Synagogue, the United Kingdom's first Reform Synagogue.[23]

Turning back to the Orthodox tradition briefly, a noteworthy development of the Victorian period was the formation of the United Synagogue movement. Initially comprising just 5 congregations, this rapidly became the dominant movement within Anglo-Jewish Orthodoxy.[24] The community produced its

22 Two sons served Anglo-Jewry musically in different ways. David Wasserzug became the minister of the Dalston Synagogue for a number of years until his death in 1918. Ivan Warren composed music which is still in use at the West London Synagogue (Reform).

23 There is a history of the first 150 years of the West London Synagogue at www.jewishgen.org/icr-uk/London/wls/history.htm which on a connected page lists ministers and wardens but not cantors or musicians. There is less information on the web for Salaman (1814-1901) than there ought to be, considering that he had a distinguished career in Victorian times as composer, pianist and conductor (Wikipedia offers pages for his sister Julia Gordon and her son William, who were both distinguished painters). Nor is there much to be found in relation to Claude Verrinder, the gentile organist at the West London Synagogue, with whom Salaman collaborated.

24 In effect, it still is: the London Beth Din and the Chief Rabbi are its organs; the standard prayerbook is published under its auspices, and so forth. Undoubtedly, though, its position has been eroded in more recent years, as orthodoxy has lurched rightwards, and this has had a particularly wearing effect on matters musical, since even large and ostensibly prosperous communities feign poverty of resource or altered priorities when it comes to appointment of competent cantors and singers to perpetuate the traditional music of our communal ancestors.

own standard prayerbook in 1892—successor editions to which are still in use today. It is perhaps noteworthy that fully five years *before* this, an official music service book was produced, under the title of *Kol Rinah V'Todah* ("The Voice of Praise and Prayer"). The preface to the 1899 second edition (the first having appeared in 1887) offers a commentary on the purpose of the volume, the attitude to choral singing and training (especially in view of the involvement of boy singers who would be tutored through the Hebrew schooling system) and the need to ensure variety in the music (so that the same material is not used every week) all make for very interesting reading from a social history perspective.

The 1899 edition of *Kol Rinah V'Todah* benefited from the services of the highly musical Rabbi Francis Lyon Cohen[25] and David M. Davis. Davis was around to work on the preparation of the third edition, which eventually appeared in 1933, a year after he passed away, and had the benefit in that time of the excellent musical ministrations of Samuel Alman. Aside from correcting a few errors for its 1948 re-impression, *Kol Rinah V'Todah* has not been touched since.[26]

Into the Twentieth Century

The final stage in this journey takes us to the period immediately prior to World War I and runs on, in effect, to the eve of World War II. Mombach died in 1880, Wasserzug in 1882 and Hast in 1911. Their music settled into the fabric of Anglo-Jewish tradition, where the better pieces have remained ever since. Regardless of their original backgrounds, they found themselves obliged to contribute music of a Victorian/Edwardian confidence that suited the general confidence of the pre-WWI Britain that became their home. This

25 Initially cantor/minister at the Borough Synagogue, one of the first to be founded in the new community developing just to the south of the River Thames, but by the date of the republication, already based in New South Wales, Australia.

26 The last republication, which is still widely available and referred to, was in 1980, and aside from changing the familiar blue binding to a black one, it made no changes at all. There were informal plans in 1995 to review it, revise the content, include new material and discard much that is no longer used etc., the significance of 1995 being the 125th anniversary of the United Synagogue. My father, Victor Tunkel, had some involvement with this. According to him, the individual who was supposed to have been masterminding the musical assembly involved, apparently lost a lot of material when he suffered a computer crash. He never got around to restoring it, and that is where matters stand. Frankly, given the degraded state of musicianship in Orthodox shuls in the UK today, a revision of this music is altogether rather unlikely now.

was the music of the Jewish community of the World's greatest empire. And even as, in later Victorian times, the Great Synagogue ceased to be the community for London's expanding and proliferating Jewish community, much of the classical music of Mombach, etc. was carried to the newly emerging synagogues and communities that were beginning to flourish as London itself expanded.

Layer onto this a very different Jewish immigration, that from Poland and Russia. In the 1880s, Jews started to arrive in the UK by the boatload, escaping from the rampages of the Tsar and the pogroms that his loyalists either encouraged or executed. They brought music which was much more "dark brown" in texture. The cantorial style was more florid, and the choral underpinning was more insistent and less jaunty. The East End of London began to brim full of little synagogues, each with a cantor and many with choirs (the darker melos of East European Jewry had nevertheless embraced with enthusiasm Sulzer's choral innovations as a concept). Yiddish was their *lingua franca* and shul music started to take on board the hue of Yiddish folk song.[27]

While numbers of cantors came to the UK, either temporarily before reaching America or to settle and make their careers, in terms of contribution to the music and compositions they used, there is one name that dominates this period: Samuel Alman. He came from Podolia originally, and arrived in London in the first years of the 20th century, leaving behind a career (if you can call it that...) as a bandsman with the Tsar's army. Alman anglicised himself, obtained an ARCM degree from the London Schools of Music, rose to prominence at the Great Synagogue, and aspired throughout to a greater degree of general musical recognition. As well as his two volumes of synagogue compositions *(Shirei Beit HaKnesset* 1925 and 1938) and a great number of part songs, Alman's musical credits include the *Ebreica* String Quartet, a number of organ preludes and, most importantly of all, *King Ahaz,* the only grand opera ever written in Yiddish. It had four performances at a Yiddish theatre in the East End in 1912 before closing after losing some £8,000 (a very large sum for those days).

27 Doubtless with a view to the development of Anglo-Jewish musical usages, the arrival of new music from Europe (new, at any rate, to the UK) and the changes in fashion, it was in the early 1930s that the United Synagogue commissioned David M. Davis and others to work on a new edition of *Kol Rinah V'Todah,* which appeared in print in 1933, a year after Davis passed away. He was the link to the preceding edition in 1899, and to the date of his death served as choirmaster at the New West End Synagogue. The new edition contains some of his compositions, but it is proper to regard Davis as essentially a member of the Victorian/Edwardian age rather than the phase which followed it and which Alman dominated.

The illustration to the right is from a cassette of selected arias from *King Ahaz* (and songs from Shostakovich's *Song Cycle from Jewish Folk Poetry),* released in London in 1984.[28]

The Anglo-Jewish musical tradition has rather fossilized from this point onwards. No singers, composers, choirmasters or musical directors of the stature of Alman have arisen since his death in 1947. Choirs of men and boys in the Orthodox tradition have disappeared (it being rather difficult to persuade boys to train for these enterprises when there are so many other distractions and demands on their time). And the cantorate itself is in a poor state of health. Indeed, there is only one Orthodox Synagogue in London (and none outside) with a full-time cantor (St John's Wood, where Cantor Moshe Haschel still serves with distinction). Home-grown talent is difficult to find, and priorities in synagogues with complex and restricted budgets now do not favour the cantor and his music any longer. Indeed, the larger Orthodox communities have fragmented, to the point where five or six different services, designed to appeal to varied tastes in worship, take place each Shabbat or festival on the same campus.

For all that, there is considerable reverence for the traditional music of the Anglo-Jewish tradition. Few people outside the ranks of the cantors and singers can tell you who wrote which particular pieces or tunes, but there are a great many that are still sung (congregationally, if not with choir and soloists). Much of the classical music of the Anglo-Jewish tradition (including Mombach, Alman, Hast and the whole of *Kol Rinah v'Todah* 1933 edition) can be downloaded in MIDI format from www.shulmusic.org.

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28 *King Ahaz* has once more started to attract some interest. I participated in December 2006 in a concert with London's Zemel Choir at the Purcell Room in London's South Bank Centre, where the choir with soloists performed a rather vibrant chorus scene from Act 2 of the Opera (dealing with the rather distasteful subject of Moloch-worship!), and soloists Eliot Alderman (tenor), Ben Siefert (bass) and Gwendolen Burton (soprano) entertained with solo arias from elsewhere in the score.

Nothing New Under the Sun: What's *Still* Wrong with Our Synagogues?

by Shoshana Brown

Having fixed my mind on the presumptuous task of writing the definitive essay on what's wrong with *shul* today?—I start to get a creeping feeling. Someone else has beaten me to it, and probably in a fashion that I could never equal. I go to my bookshelf and pull down a wonderful collection of writings by Abraham Joshua Heschel, and find a much-underlined and margin-starred essay in which Heschel writes:[1]

> Our services are conducted with pomp and precision. The rendition of the liturgy is smooth. Everything is present: decorum, voice, ceremony. But one thing is missing: ***life***. One knows in advance what will ensue. There will be no surprise, no adventure of the soul; there will be no sudden burst of devotion. Nothing is going to happen to the soul. Nothing unpredictable must happen to the person who prays. He will attain no insight into the words he reads; he will attain no new perspective for the life he lives. Our motto is monotony. What was will be, and there is nothing new in the synagogue. The fire has gone out of our worship. It is cold, stiff, and dead. Inorganic Judaism... The services are prim, the voice is dry, the synagogue is clean and tidy, and the soul of prayer lies in agony. You know no one will scream, no one will cry, the words will be still-born... Assembled in the synagogue everything is there–the body, the benches, the books. But one thing is absent: soul. It is as if they all suffered from ***spiritual absenteeism***. In good prayer, words become one with the soul. Yet in our synagogues, people who are otherwise sensitive, vibrant, arresting, sit there aloof, listless, lazy. The dead do not praise God. Those who are spiritually dull cannot praise the Lord.

It seems nothing much has changed. And yet, our true calling—as cantors, cantorial students, cantorial soloists, as rabbis and as lay worship-leaders—is to try and raise these dry bones and make them live again! But first we have to look at why they died. As a part-time cantorial soloist, a cantorial intern with the Cantors Assembly, a cantorial student with the Alliance for Jewish Renewal (Aleph), and as a member of a suburban Conservative synagogue, I get the opportunity to experience and to study—*kivyakhol*—this phenomenon from a number of different angles. Of course we now live in a "post-B'nai Jeshurun" world, where droves of synagogues—both Conservative and

1 "The Spirit of Jewish Prayer," *Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity*, Susannah Heschel, ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux), 1996: 100-103; originally published in *Proceedings of the Rabbinical Assembly of America*, vol. 17, 1953.

Reform, and perhaps some Reconstructionist and certainly non-affiliated congregations–all want to jump on the bandwagon (or, rather, bring the bandwagon into the sanctuary) and host "Friday Night Live" services. Many cantors and rabbis are now trying, even on Shabbat morning, to slip in some *freylekh* and easily-learned tunes by the late Reb Shlomo Carlebach, by Debbie Friedman, Craig Taubman, Shefa Gold and other contemporary Jewish composers. Despite the hue and cry amongst some of our number about the "dumbing down" of the service, by and large I would say this is all to the good. Let prayer be alive; let the people dance, let them clap, let them praise God *with all their bones*!

But let's also face facts. Out here in the suburbs these services are few and far between; and they all too frequently have a feeling of artificiality to them. "Oh, we're supposed to dance now! Look, the rabbi is trying to lead us around the sanctuary; come on, let's have 'fun' [like those people on the Upper West Side]." I work at a small *shul* with a Renewal rabbi-in-training. He is one of the most sincere, heartfelt *ovdei HaShem* I have ever been privileged to know. But we cater to young, mostly wealthy Long Island families who put a premium on seeing their sons and daughters become *b'nei mitzvah*, and we are so busy running these showcase-services for their offspring that there is no time (or space; our sanctuary is still very small) to cultivate a rhythm of regular services with a regular *kahal* of folk who are there simply for the sake of the worship of God. The rabbi has me strumming guitar, beating my *djumbek*,[2] singing all the heartfelt alternative tunes you could want, but in truth I am more likely to feel a bit of a pulse from the congregation when I intone the old-fashioned tunes for *Ein Kamokha*, *Aleinu*, or *Adon Olam*. Why? Because the only people in attendance who know any of the songs or prayers are the grandparents and great-grandparents of these young *bnei mitzvah*! Everyone else—so beautifully turned out with their expensive suits and perfect nails—sits and listens. It is not worship; it is a show–or to be kinder, a celebration like a graduation or a wedding. They come to support the child and the family (and certainly to celebrate with them at the subsequent party). That is the only reason they are there; they have not come out of a felt need to connect to the power source that vivifies all existence.

My first job as a cantorial soloist on Long Island was at a small Reconstructionist congregation–a *heimish* place where the politics were ultra-liberal and the people were down to earth. I liked this community a lot, and by and large they liked me. But they did not like to pray! They liked to study, debate, discuss, hold book groups and fun-filled social fund-raisers. But they did

2 Small hand drum.

not "get" prayer, and can you blame them? The less-than-a-*minyan* of faithful regulars were taught by the rabbi that prayer is really an "inner dialogue," in which we remind ourselves of what we need to do to repair the world. Of course this is true to a certain extent, and a noble sentiment. But who needs to go and sit in a synagogue for two or more hours on a beautiful Saturday morning in order to have an "inner dialogue?" Why not have it on one of our world-class beaches, or, if we're really serious about this "repairing" business, at a political rally, or a soup kitchen?

In the Conservative *shul* where I go to pray simply as a congregant, I am impressed by the much higher number of regulars who come simply because it is Shabbat. But it amazes me that they are satisfied with a service in which, as Heschel writes, "there will be no surprise, no adventure of the soul...nothing unpredictable must happen." I suspect that, like me, they come to connect as a community. Many of us do not arrive until well into the Torah service. "Goldberg comes to talk to God; I come to talk to Goldberg." There is something sweet, and honest, about this old joke. If I want to take my time with my *t'fillah*, and to sing my soul out, I'd better stay at home and *daven* alone. But I take seriously Rabbi Hillel's teaching, *al tifrosh min ha-tsibbur*,[3] and once a week (if I am not working a bar mitzvah) I go to talk to Goldberg.

Well, whom have I not picked on yet? Ah, there's my holy *hevra* the Jewish Renewal crowd! Indeed, amongst my cantorial- and rabbinical-student colleagues, and amongst our esteemed teachers, there are so many whose spiritual practices and energies I am nourished and awed by. That being said, it is not infrequent that a Renewal-style service (which you may experience at the Jewish retreat center, Elat Chayyim, if there is no Renewal *kahal* in your area) may strike one as just "too much fun." I admit it, we are "spiritual ecstasy" junkies! But sometimes one needs to descend from the "high," to get down and deep with God, and to connect in a livable way that you can do even on a weekday, even alone and away from the drums and the dancing throngs. And truly Renewal services vary tremendously, depending on whether they are led by some of Renewal's most learned, serious practitioners, or by a Renewal "newbie" in his/her living room, who may be full of earnestness and true love of God, but have next to no understanding of the siddur, the *matbei'a*,[4] or the way Jewish liturgy is supposed to work.

The problem is, in so many places, it isn't working. And why is this? When I think back on some of the most satisfying Jewish liturgical experiences I've had in the 20-plus years since my conversion (and some of these were before

3 "Do not separate yourself from the community" (*Pirkei Avot* 2: 4 -5).

4 Statutory parts of the liturgy.

my actual conversion), I ask myself: what did these *davening* experiences have in common? It was the joyful energy, and the commitment of the worshipers–not to *t'fillah* only, but to living a Jewish, and largely *observant* Jewish life. Some of these services were in Yerushalayim, in places like Baka'a and French Hill, or at Machon Pardes where I studied for a year; and then there was the Orthodox *minyan* at Harvard Hillel in Cambridge; and some were amongst the JTS-community when I was a graduate student there, living on the Upper West Side. Now I frequently experience exquisite services when I congregate with my fellow "smikhah-student" colleagues at various Jewish Renewal functions. This latter group does not–on the whole–share the same intensity of commitment to traditional *halakhah* as the other groups mentioned, but their commitment to learning, to *tikkun olam,* and to nurturing their personal spiritual lives brings a similar kind of *oomph* and authenticity to their joy in *davening*. Most of these groups, by the way, functioned without any official rabbinic or cantorial leadership per se. They were, however, liberally sprinkled with rabbis, cantors, or clergy-in-training.

So what do I make of this? Why do Heschel's words ring as true today as they did over fifty years ago? Some things don't change. It takes a lot of work and commitment to live a serious Jewish life, especially a God-centered one. Perhaps within the mainstream and right-of-mainstream Orthodox world there are a good number of individuals who live an observant life out of fear, superstition, or guilt (rather than out of a freely-chosen commitment); never having felt comfortable in that world, I never lingered there long enough to find out. What all the groups I mentioned above have in common is *self-selection*. All the young and not-so-young adults with whom I have fond memories of *davening*, and whose *davening* was so deep or so joyous, were there because they *wanted* to be there, and to be no where else! They were driven by love and passion: their welcoming of *Shabbat haMalkah* on *Erev Shabbat*, and their lusty singing of *Nishmat Kol Hai* on Shabbat morning were the joyful outpourings of their souls at the end of a week during which they had worked hard to do *mitzvot* and keep God in their consciousness all week long.

You can bring in the guitars, the drums, the tambourines; you can hire Craig Taubman and his band as your special musical guest for a unique *Shabbaton*. You can hire famous speakers or Torah-teachers, you can go on retreat, do *havdalah* on the beach...but in the end, all these things are only, at best, tools to get people to "taste, and see that the Lord is good!" At worst, they are gimmicks that synagogue members can boast about ("Our shul brought *fill in the blank currently-popular-spiritual-teacher's name* out for a *Shabbaton*!"), a

kind of "status symbol," but hardly a sign of how they are going to live their lives the rest of the week.

Heschel, in response to suggestions for ameliorating the problem of low synagogue attendance with the institution of specially-designated *Shabbatot*, such as "Boy Scouts Sabbath," "Jewish War Veterans Sabbath," etc. (we all know the trick of ear-marking certain Shabbatot for certain grades of the religious school, where they "lead" or make "presentations"), remarks wryly, "Why not a *Sabbath* Sabbath?" He goes on to emphasize, "*Spiritual problems* cannot be solved by *administrative techniques*." Our current-day efforts to solve our spiritual malaise through musical or other techniques to enliven our worship are somewhat more to the point, but in the end they are still "techniques." In truth, I can only think of two things that can lift us up out of the doldrums, bringing authenticity to our group prayer, and these two things are actually the same thing.

They are not easy to come by. They cannot be purchased out of the rabbi's or cantor's discretionary funds. They cannot be won by the hard work of the ritual committee. They have little to do with the synagogue's attendance numbers or the health of its coffers. They are:

1. The commitment of the individual congregant to loving God with all his/her heart, soul, and strength; and
2. The same commitment on the part of the rabbi/cantor and/or spiritual leaders, with an added emphasis on their *daily prayer life*.

By this I don't mean simply going to daily *minyan* and being *yotsei*; I mean paying attention to the words they are saying to God each day; rejoicing with God, crying before God, attempting at some level a certain amount of *d'veikut* in their *davening* each day. No matter how beautiful the cantor's voice may be, no one is going to "get it" if it is just *beautiful*. Much better a simple congregational *sh'li'ah tsibbur* who transmits true piety, reverence, and *simhah* in coming into God's presence than a Metropolitan Opera understudy!

Can a renewal of piety and commitment to personal prayer with *kavvanah* on the part of the *k'lei kodesh* bring about a revolution in Jewish worship today? If you measure this by numbers (of people at a service, of families who join, etc.), the answer is very likely "hardly at all." But at a deeper, more serious level, I think the answer is "yes," and I am happy to say that I believe the revolution has already begun. More rabbinical and cantorial students, even ordained clergy, are studying spiritual direction than ever before. The subtitle of a recent article in *The New York Jewish Week* informs us that "grow-

ing numbers of the liberal [Reform] movement's teens and young adults are embracing tradition, posing a challenge for leaders."[5] According to this article, about a quarter of the campers at a New York Reform summer camp, when confronted with a visiting musician who led the Friday evening prayers set to "an easy-listening jazz sound," walked out of the service. In small groups outside the main pavilion, they formed their own *minyanim,* in order to *daven* in a way that was more authentic for them. They didn't want *jazz Shabbat*; they just wanted Shabbat! They didn't want to be an *audience*; they wanted to be a *kahal*.

Can such a renewal be brought about? Yes, but only by one individual at a time; and they must come to the water—and drink—by their own volition. What is new about this? Nothing really. It's been the same since Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel's time, since the time of the Baal Shem Tov, since the time of the Hebrew Prophets, and since the days of Moshe Rabbeinu and Avraham Avinu as well. The one "new thing" of our day is that now women—like myself—can speak out about it as well. But that hardly changes the real issue. It may not be the whole of the solution, but if *a commitment to connect authentically with God in prayer*, on a daily basis, *and to strive to live continually with the consciousness of being in the presence of God* (through the observance of *mitzvot* throughout the week) are not the starting points, then all other "solutions" are doomed to fail.

Many questions yet dangle: what about Hebrew literacy? Should we pray in the vernacular so that we will understand what we're saying? If so, what becomes of our awesome connection with the past, with our ancestors, and with Jews all over the world—and what of the mystery, beauty, and playfulness of the Hebrew language itself—that will be lost if/when we move away from Hebrew? If we stick with Hebrew, how can we possibly educate enough youth *and adults* at a serious—and sophisticated—enough level, so that they are not just getting the syllables correctly off the page of the *siddur*, but are also *understanding what they are praying*? How can we get them to give up enough of their time and energy to commit themselves to such serious study?

What about the length of services? Do we really need *so many* prayers, *so many* words? Is it not perhaps better for a *davener* to say *fewer* words, *fewer* prayers, but say/chant/sing them more slowly, with more understanding, with greater *kavannah*? What about the "flow" of our services? Are our rabbis and cantors even trained to think about how to channel the energies of the *t'fillot* in their fixed order in such a way as to maximize the effectiveness of

5 Debra Nussbaum Cohen, "Reform Youth Flexing Their Ritual Muscle," *The Jewish Week*, August 10, 2007.

the service's flow from "fore-pray"[6] to "pray" to "implore and thank" to group study (Torah reading and *dvar Torah*), and back out into the world again?

These are serious issues, and there are scores of others that might be raised. But *until we prayer-leaders take our own prayer lives–and our Jewish practice–seriously*, very little will actually change. However, there is hope. Jews starving for genuine spiritual nourishment, parched for a glimpse of "godliness" in their Jewish communities, can, like those young Reform campers, vote with their feet. It is up to us whether they will find what they are looking for *with us,* or whether they will walk out on us. But you can be sure that those who sincerely seek the Blessed Holy One will ultimately not be forsaken, as we are reminded every time we recite the familiar *Ashrei* (Psalm 145: 18; translation from *Siddur Sim Shalom*, 1985):

The Lord is near to all who call,

To all who call upon Him in truth.

Is our task an easy one? Once again, Heschel's words are profoundly—and perennially—true: "We must not think that *kavvanah* is a small matter. It requires effort, and we may fail more often than we succeed. But the battle for *kavvanah* must go on, if we are not to die of spiritual paralysis."[7]

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6 I am indebted to my teacher Reb Zalman Schachter-Shalomi for this felicitous coinage; but much more deeply indebted for his master-teaching in the field of "davenology."

7 *Moral Grandeur*, op. cit., p. 114.

How My Being in the High Holiday Choir Turned Me into a Shul Goer

By Raymond P. Scheindlin

"You'll be in the choir." I was only about seven years old and didn't really understand what the old man was talking about; but with those words he sent me down the path that led, six decades later, to where I am this day.

The pronouncement was made at the far end of our synagogue's assembly hall. Mr. Russikov (I don't know how his last name is spelled and no one is left to ask) had told us three boys—me, Harry Blumberg, and Max Bliss—that he wanted to talk to us after Kiddush. While the handful of old men who made up the congregation were still gathered around the tiny table in front of the dais having a second schnapps with herring on Tam Tams and chattering in Yiddish, Mr. Russikov took us aside and told us each to sing "Áden Oilem," the hymn that comes at the end of the service. I don't remember which one of us went first, but when it was over, I was the chosen one—for this had turned out to be an audition to sing in the choir during the High Holiday services in the fall.

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My parents were instructed to purchase a copy of the "uniform" mahzor of Brith Sholom (nominally Conservative—but served by Orthodox rabbis) Community Center in Philadelphia. This was the Orthodox High Holiday prayer book compiled by British chief Rabbi Hermann Adler, a two-volume set with Hebrew and English on facing pages, accompanied by a copy of the S'lihot service, a ratty pamphlet densely packed from end to end with all-Hebrew print. My parents authorized the shammash, Mr. Russikov, to procure the books, and when they arrived, my mother inscribed my name and address on the inside cover of the Adler Mahzor and on the first page of the S'lihot pamphlet. Inside, Mr. Russikov had marked certain passages in ink: one in the Selihot service, two in the Rosh HaShanah service, and one in the service for Yom Kippur. The meaning of these markings became clear on Saturday after services, when Mr. Russikov instructed me (but not Harry or Max) to meet with him during Kiddush. The markings indicated my solos, which Mr. Russikov proceeded to teach me. Each Saturday, he and I would return from the assembly hall to the now-empty sanctuary, where he would sing my solos to me and make me repeat them until I knew them. I had to do more than get the notes and word right—with the shriveled, cigarette-stained, yet translucent index fingers of both hands, he would conduct me

as I sang, enforcing what I now know to call phrasing—matching the tunes to the meaning of the words.

In summer, choir rehearsals began. Once a week, my mother would drive me to the cantor's house in the immigrant neighborhood and take her place with the ladies—the wives of the cantor and of the adult choir members—on the porch, where they would sit and gossip, while we, the singers, would gather around the square steel table covered with oilcloth that occupied the space between the sink and the stove in the center of the cantor's kitchen. A the sink's end sat Cantor Pavalow, a bony, gray-haired elderly man, before him a huge mahzor with big black lettering and pages greasy and crumpled in the lower corners from decades of being pinched between the fingers for turning. Facing him at the stove end sat the choir leader, a round-faced middle-aged man with black hair. On one side sat the tenor and the bass, and facing them sat I and Harvey, the cantor's son. We sang in four parts, with the choir leader conducting us, cueing us, and giving our pitches. In my case, the cues were absolutely essential, as I had no idea of the order or contents of the service, and probably couldn't even read Hebrew very fluently at that stage.

Most of the choir's work consisted in humming chords as background to the cantor's singing. Typically, when he would come to the end of a phrase, we would hit a chord that harmonized it, and he would sing the next phrase against the background of that chord until his melody forced a change of harmony, and we would oblige by shifting to another chord. Sometimes we would start the chord by repeating the last word of the phrase after the cantor. There were a few composed four-part pieces, the only one of which I can remember was a setting of the first paragraph of the *U-N'taneh Tokef*, of which more later. There was a duet for me and Harvey. And there were my four solos.

Philadelphia is always hot and humid in the summer, and ordinary people did not yet have air conditioning; I did not even hear of it until a few years later, when we moved to the suburbs. There were nights when I would lie awake dripping in my bed, the hot pillow shoved aside and my head pressed against the bit of wall under the open window, waiting for the air to stir, listening to a rustling leaf and hoping that the puff of air that moved it would reach me. In the cantor's kitchen, the air was close, with the four sweating men and the two boys crowded around the table with its sticky oilcloth surface. From the cooler porch, the women could be heard chatting in a mixture of Yiddish and English as we worked.

Harvey and I hated each other. Perhaps the heat made us short-tempered, or perhaps it was having to keep still for so long at the end of the day. I found

him revolting, for his hands holding the mahzor as he sat on my left had warts on the backs and his fingernails were chewed to the quick. But perhaps the real reason I was angry was that he knew what was going on and I didn't, or perhaps it was an early case of singers' competitiveness. The rancor was mutual, and it grew to the point that at one rehearsal we ended up fighting, really fighting, with fists, and somehow he came out of it with a bloody nose. How this could possibly have happened is a mystery to me, because I was the softest boy who ever lived, and don't remember there being any free time in which such a fight could have occurred. Maybe there was a break in the rehearsal, and we went outside to cool off and got into a wrangle. Bloodying his nose made me feel good, though I couldn't escape the feeling that it had happened by accident so that I didn't really deserve to pat myself on the back. I don't remember getting into trouble over it. Since I was a goody-goody and he was a rough kid, he probably got blamed.

Summer passed. One night my mother woke me around 11 PM and got me dressed in my itchy suit, and the three of us trundled off in our prewar Chevy to the shul. It was the night of S'lihot, the Saturday night before Rosh HaShanah, the beginning of the liturgical season of the High Holidays. S'lihot begins with the psalm, *Ashrei*, and one of my solos occurred toward the end of the psalm, so mine must have been the first voice heard after the cantor's that holiday season. I can only imagine the *nakhes* this must have caused my parents and the old folks who were the shul regulars, and the envy and anger it must have caused any of the other young parents—like two of my aunts and my uncle—who happened to be present.

The services of the High Holidays are long and our shul did not have a choir loft. Despite the imposing name of Brith Sholom Community Center, our shul was a tiny, makeshift operation in a partly renovated 19th-century brick schoolhouse beside a train track. It had no staff but a rabbi and a janitor, and of course it did not have a permanent cantor or a choir, but only a hired freelance cantor and his choir for the High Holidays. What had been the schoolyard was an untended no-man's land overgrown with weeds that had almost become trees. On the second floor were classrooms (separated by ancient movable walls called "sashes" covered with blackboard on each side) and a tiny rabbi's office piled with Hebrew-school textbooks and old *World Over* magazines; and on the third, a tiny kitchen with neat stacks of glass dishes. The ground floor consisted of a central hall flanked by two large rooms—the assembly hall with a portrait of the late President Franklin Roosevelt over the dais, and the sanctuary. The railroad tracks ran alongside the sanctuary wall, right outside the window, probably close enough to take

your hand off if you reached out while a train was passing. Trains didn't pass often, but from time to time they did, obliterating the service.

The sanctuary couldn't have seated more than a hundred in its rows of movie-theater-type seats. The *bimah* was a dais occupying one end of the room and separated from it by a wooden railing, furnished with a large reading table in the center facing the ark, a lectern to the left facing the congregation, and the flags of the United States and of Palestine (since May of that year: Israel), at the extreme right and left. We singers stood as we had sat in the cantor's kitchen: the cantor, in the narrow space between the railing and the reading table facing the ark; the leader, facing him, with his back to the ark and the rest of us around the reading table.

It was hard to stand still for so long, especially since, unlike the other members of the choir, I didn't know how to participate in the praying part of the service. For long stretches I would shift my weight from one leg to the other, fidget with the fringes of my tallit, and occupy myself by rubbing the nap of fuzzy white cloth that covered the reading table, waiting for the choir's turn to hum a chord, sing a tune, or deliver one of its set pieces. Now and then the leader would point to me, and I would perform one of my solos or do the duet with the hated Harvey, then to sink back into boredom and daydreaming. During the stretches when I wasn't needed, the leader took pity on me and whispered that I might sit down for a while on one of the two thrones that stood beside the ark and relieve my aching legs.

I spent a lot of the time watching the cantor. He wore a white gown and a huge crown-shaped white satin headdress (somewhat frayed) with a tassel, and carried a tuning fork and a handkerchief. It was shocking to see him throw himself to the floor during *Aleinu*, deflating to see him looking up at us from the floor, supporting himself with one hand and waving at us with the tuning fork in the other to keep us all chanting together. I wish I could remember what happened to that white satin crown during Aleinu and the other prostrations that occur in the course of the High Holiday services; I don't see how it could have stayed on as he fell, but I also don't remember him removing it in preparation for the prostration.

At one point in the service the cantor disappeared from the *bimah*, and when I looked up, he was standing at the sanctuary's rear entrance beginning the prayer I now know as *Hin'ni*. This is the emotional moment when the cantor proclaims, "Here am I, worthless, terrified, and panic-stricken for fear of the God of Israel." His face was contorted—with the emotion described in the text?—from concentrating on the complicated music? out of pious awe? stage fright?—as he moved down the center aisle chanting the prayer

in fantastic minor-key melismas against the sustained chords that we were holding over from each cadence. The congregation, which had been restless, now listened, rapt. But, though this prayer was intended to be the cantor's alone, they did not listen in silence, for the tension generated by the chant had to be released. Each time he would reach the end of a phrase and we would hit a chord, the congregation would chime in, too, especially the old men, who knew and probably understood the words, singing the last word of the phrase along with him and with us. He reached the bimah dabbing his face with the handkerchief as the congregation stood for the majestic Kaddish introducing the next part of the service. When the moment in the Kaddish came for them to sing the response, all the energy pent up during the *Hin'ni* was released, and the sanctuary itself seemed to sing with them. It was a moment that impressed itself on me for the rest of my life. Luckily, no train happened to pass by during that moment.

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Some twenty-five years later, I moved with my young family to Cobble Hill, Brooklyn, and took up a position as professor of Hebrew literature at the Jewish Theological Seminary in Manhattan. We attended services every Saturday together at Congregation Baith Israel Anshei Emet, known as the Kane Street Shul. Once a grand and important congregation, the shul had been in a decades-long decline that began to reverse itself in the early seventies thanks to an influx of young professionals who rediscovered city life and revived the shul when it was on the point of closing.

Most of the congregants at that time had only a rudimentary Jewish education, but I was at home with them; I preferred their lay enthusiasm and relaxed religious ways to the more self-conscious and ideologically driven atmosphere of the Seminary. I was glad to contribute my skills to the congregation by reading the Torah— the whole parashah— week after week, thereby saving the congregation what it had been paying an Orthodox student to walk all the way from Williamsburg to Cobble Hill every Saturday for this purpose. On Sabbaths, I shared the leading of the services with one or two other congregants, and on the High Holidays, I took over the role of the cantor, thereby saving the congregation another major budget item.

Eventually I became the shul's part-time rabbi. This was a completely unexpected turn in my life, for although I was ordained, I had never intended to be a practicing rabbi. As it turned out, I learned a great deal from the experience and derived great satisfaction from this new relationship with the congregation, which lasted three years. But while acting as rabbi, I did not give up being the High Holiday cantor. Each year, after delivering the sermon,

I would retire to the rear of the synagogue to begin the *Hin'ni*, changing roles from rabbi to cantor, and a congregant would take over the traditional rabbi's responsibilities until near the end of the service. About ten years after joining the shul, I moved away from the neighborhood and relocated in Manhattan, but I continued to return to Kane Street to be the High Holiday cantor, and do so to this day.

Each of the functions I performed at Kane Street—even the role of ex-rabbi— suited me in one way or another, but the role of the cantor on the High Holidays was the fulfillment of an enormous nostalgic fantasy. Brith Sholom Community Center had long ago disbanded, and its decrepit schoolhouse building had been reduced to a weedy concrete lot littered with brick. But starting in 1975, when I began to serve as cantor at Kane Street, I could revive and relive my childhood memory of the old shul, this time not as a boy bored and awed and too ignorant of the old-timers' ways to follow the service, but as the central figure of the entire liturgical drama, as the reincarnation of Cantor Pavalow himself. It was no trouble to recover the tunes I had learned as a choirboy, for I had been humming them to myself for two-and-a-half decades; within a few years, I had my friends and fellow congregants singing all of then with me, so that tunes and chants that had originated somewhere in Eastern Europe and had been transmitted to me in an obscure immigrants' synagogue in southwest Philadelphia became the traditional chants of a booming brownstoners' synagogue in an up-and-coming Brooklyn neighborhood.

True, I was not really a cantor, not having the vocal gifts or the musical knowledge to perform true cantorial music, nor did I have a tuning fork or crown-shaped, tasseled white satin headdress. But I was a pretty fair lay cantor, what is known in Hebrew as a *ba'al t'fillah*. My command of the traditional High Holiday chants was solid, I had a repertoire of appropriate tunes that the congregation could sing along with, and my knowledge of the liturgy and the liturgical poetry was authoritative, since these are among the subjects of my academic expertise that I teach to rabbinical and cantorial students at the Seminary. The shul provided me with a *kitl*, the traditional white gown worn by officiants on the High Holidays, and instead of a tuning fork, I acquired a pitch pipe, which is much easier to use.

For several years, I led the services alone, singing both the cantor's chants and the choir's responses as best I could, and hoping that the congregation would eventually pick up the choir's responses and sing them along with me. To a great extent, this has been a success. All Kane Street regulars know, for example, the special tune for Adon Olam (the hymn that was once my audition piece for Cantor Pavalow's choir) that we use on the High Holidays. This

is a tune I have heard nowhere else; I learned it as a boy in the choir, and it definitely goes back to the old country, for an ancient and delightful congregant, Mr. Antonovsky, remembered it from his childhood in the Ukraine and even berated me for singing it incorrectly! (His memory was perfect; I had altered the tune intentionally because I thought it too repetitive and lengthy for modern use in its original form.) I doubt that the Kane Street regulars of my generation and their now-grown children have heard this tune anywhere else, and I feel sure that it gives them all a shiver of white-robed solemnity and nostalgia, as it does me, and that it will haunt them forever.

The process of reconstructing my old shul's High Holiday services of my childhood reached its climax around 1978, when, together with some fellow congregants, I helped to organize a choir. I had a free hand, and would have liked to reproduce the old services exactly, but there was a limit to what I had absorbed at age eight and nine and, of that, to what I could remember. I lacked the musical training to devise the chords for the choir to hum against my chanting, and I was too busy with my career and with my young family to try to track down the set pieces we used to do. Of course, there was no thought of using boys for the high voices; my solos were given to women.

One of the singers had a knowledge of basic musical composition; one day, I sat him down and sang for him the bits and snatches I could remember of the *U-N'taneh Tokef*—including, of course, my solo, *k'vakarat ro'eh edro*—or *kevakoras royeh edroi*, as I originally sang it—and he worked it up into a respectable choral piece that cannot be too different from the one that was once sung by Cantor Pavalow and his choir. It became one of the central items in our repertoire; we assigned my childhood solo to the soprano and even added a few new fancy scale passages for me to sing solo.

I have now been the High Holiday cantor at the Kane Street Shul for over thirty years. A whole generation of Kane Street children, including my own, have grown up, gone away to college, and settled elsewhere, but eventually many of them show up at the High Holiday services, sometimes with wives and husbands. One such young couple recently showed up with a baby. They seek me out during Kiddush and tell me how they missed the music of our High Holiday services during the years since they left their parents' home, when they went to services elsewhere or didn't go at all, how happy it made them to be back and to hear the old tunes again. I am flattered, of course, when they tell me that they don't want to hear any other cantor on the High Holidays; but beyond that, it gratifies me to see them making their own nostalgia out of mine and so carrying it on into the next generation. At the

Kane Street Shul I have built a monument of liturgy to my childhood, to my old shul, and to my grandparents' generation.

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A "V'-Ne'emar" Boy Remembers
By Garrett Field

The approach of Autumn always reminds me of my boyhood in Detroit, walking through the cooler air to choir rehearsals at B'nai Moshe in Oak Park, the Conservative congregation where my family belonged. The music that we practiced was so different from what we heard from Cantor Louis Klein the rest of the year that I could hardly wait to perform it from the elevated *bimah* with my fellow boy choristers, circled around the *shulḥan* on which the Torah was read. We accompanied Cantor Klein proudly, our treble voices blending with the cello-like vibrance of his rich baritone. For over forty years he had served our *shul*; someone said he was the spiritual glue that kept B'nai Moshe together.

I didn't know it at the time but participating in the cantor's boy's choir connected me to generations of *m'shor'rim* a century earlier, Eastern European boys who wandered from province to province with a cantor, singing for money and food. In his book 1988 *Chosen Voices*, ethnomusicologist Mark Slobin cites the 1942 memoir of Mikhl Gelbart, a composer and music critic.

> Every ḥazzan in every city in Eastern Europe had a permanent choir of *m'shor'rim*. The ḥazzan did not pay them any wages. They drew their support by going every Friday with a sealed collection box from door to door; by singing with him at weddings and circumcisions—and after they had sung a *Mi SheBeirakh* prayer on behalf of the bride's father and the groom's father, the choirboys circulated among the guests asking for "*MiSheBeirakh* money;" by spending the entire month of Elul prior to the High Holidays at the cemetery, waiting for people who came to visit graves—to sing for them the memorial prayer *Eil Molei Raḥamim* with a wailing melody and a special effort to elicit tears from the mourners—and then extending their hands for "*Molei* money;" by going from house to house with a lantern on Hanukkah asking for money; by putting out a collection plate in the vestibule of the synagogue just before Yom Kippur and other fast days. The ḥazzan didn't have to feed the choirboys either. They had "eating days"—rotating meals at local homes, like seminary students—if a day wasn't covered, the choirboy went hungry.

The boy's choir I sang in did not travel from province to province, we sang at the same building each year. We sang for free and only met a few times a year for rehearsals and performances. We had a nickname: the "V'-Ne'emar" boys, since our accompaniment of Cantor Klein consisted mainly of repeating the word *V'-Ne'emar* ("and it is said"). We did have an audition. But since the cantor also helped all of us with our Bar Mitzvah preparation and heard us

sing at the Hillel Day School that was located at B'nai Moshe, he presumably scouted out the kids who could sing, so it was not just a blind audition. Not many new kids were added each year and it was boys only. As for rehearsals, the group stood around the table on the *bimah* and each "V'-Ne'emar" boy would take a turn singing solos. We would practice the group melodies as well, with Cantor Klein banging his mini-pitchfork before each passage. Sometimes one boy would sing the solo, then the cantor would ask others to perform it. Although all the boys had sort of established which songs were "theirs," he liked hearing the different versions. Often the choir would be made up of siblings; it seemed like an exclusive group.

As for his rehearsal technique, the cantor would sing a passage first, then ask us to repeat it. Younger members just learned the material on their own from listening to the older boys sing, so that when it was their turn to sing that particular solo, they were already familiar with it. At rehearsals the cantor would use his hand to conduct a little—to remind us to hit high notes or hold certain notes—but he never conducted during a service. He didn't smile much, be we could always tell when he thought we had done a good job.

During the *Yamim Nora'im* we felt the prestige that came with being "V'-Ne'emar" boys. We would hang out in the cantor's office for most of the day until being summoned to the *bimah* for our performances. Missing every part of the services except when we were needed made us feel very important. We each had our own *tallit* bag and *mahzor* and walked around like we owned the place. It felt like we were the stars of the service and everyone was waiting for the "V'-Ne'emar" boys to take the "stage."

On the *bimah* we faced a sea of Jewish faces, most of them expectant. We felt both excited and nervous. Afterwards, all the elderly people would come up and compliment us on our voices and want to talk to us... Whenever we came across another "V'-Ne'emar" boy and nodded or said hello, we always felt a kind of closeness to him, as though we had shared an important experience, that we had done something great and exciting and special and memorable. It was a kind of secret, proud comradeship.

This reminiscence is the by-product of a course on "Jewish Musical Worlds" that Garrett Field took with Dr. Mark Slobin at Wesleyan University. He is currently completing work towards a Masters degree in ethnomusicology, a hands-on study of the music of the first Karnatak mandolinist and an exploration of late 20th-and 21st-century change in South Indian instrumental Karnatak music.

Yearning for Compassion—Sol Zim's *Musical Machzor for Rosh HaShanah*

Cantors Assembly, NY, 2006, 301 pp.

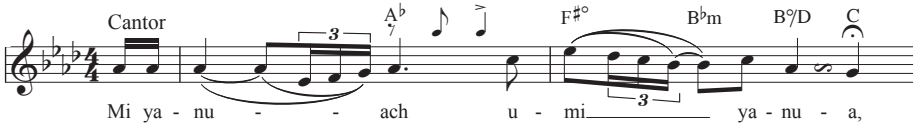
Reviewed by Jaclyn Chernett

Cantor/composer Sol Zim's aim in life is to promote and apply *nusah ha-t'fillah* in ways that will enable congregations to participate joyfully and with devotion in prayer. To this end, he has spent years writing prolific amounts of music for every service and teaching his material to cantorial and rabbinical students as well as lay *ba' alei t'fillah*.

Back in the 1970s, Zim won awards in Israel for his Hasidic-style compositions, and many of them are still used regularly in synagogues across the world. Yet his music did not appeal to all tastes. Many felt it was too "happy-clappy" and therefore inappropriate for the formal expression they were used to in Jewish worship. When smaller, more intimate minyanim took root, congregants assumed an active part of the experience rather than remain a passive audience, even where their Hebrew reading levels might be very low. They found their voice through niggunim, spirited melodies—with or without words—that appealed to children as well as adults and encouraged them to sing in the synagogue with verve.

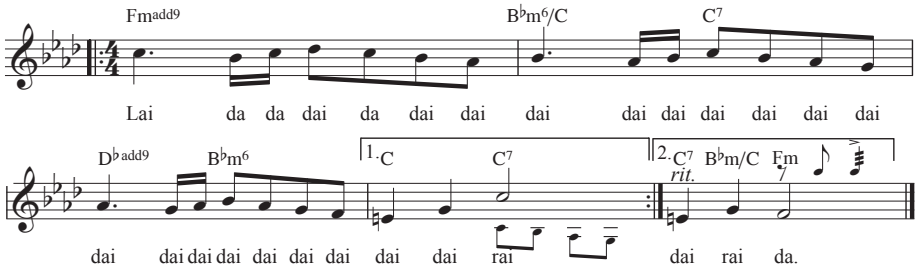
Zim's ideal has been always to retain traditional nusah with significant moments of hazzanut, alongside optional congregational singing of refrains and niggunim. As in Zim's other anthologies, the *Musical Machzor for Rosh Hashanah* is structured to offer such choice. Traditional nusah is constant for each unit of prayer, followed by the option of several compositions set with interchangeable sections that offer hazzanut and Hasidic-style refrains for almost every text. If practitioners want to use this book as a guide to leading Rosh HaShanah services simply using the nusah sections alone, it is possible. Moreover, not only do they have access to the Ashkenazi tradition (Eastern European form) but they can root it in harmonic guidelines that appear above the staff even when davening *a cappella*, the norm for most traditional services.

In the bulk of published hazzanic collections we are given a single line of music. Still, a tradition handed down orally for centuries leaves listeners with the memory of harmonic choral accompaniment. These ghost harmonies influence the authors of anthologies as well, according to the nuances of their remembered traditions. In this respect Zim's suggested chord markings can be surprising (Example 1; a phrase from Mi Yanu'ah U-Mi Yanu'a, "Who shall rest and who shall be disturbed," p. 177).



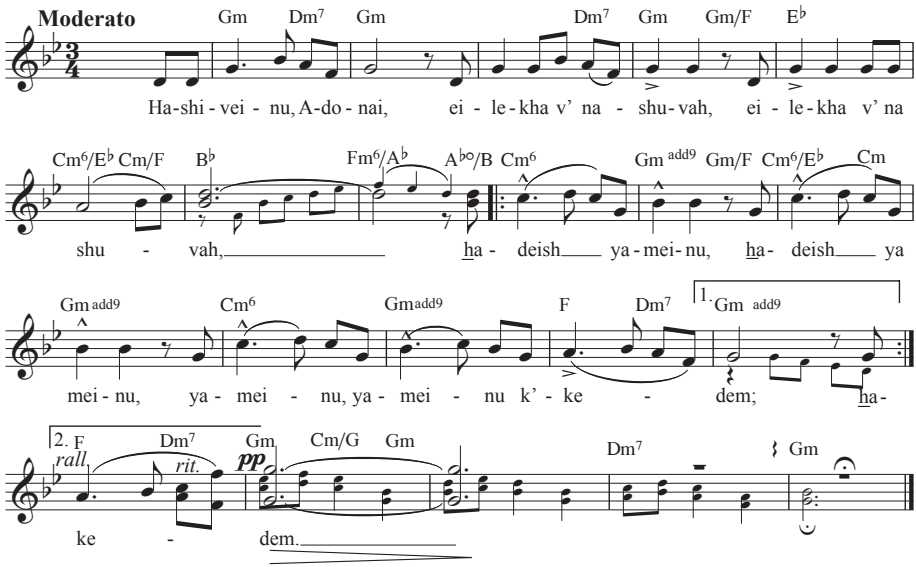
Example 1. ***Surprising harmonies*** *for a phrase from Mi Yanu'ah U-Mi Yanu'a.*

Zim's communal interludes go beyond the traditionally expected reiterations of introductory liturgical formulations such as U-V'khein ("And therefore..."), adding a niggun that draws worshipers in while affording the hazzan a brief respite (Example 2; p. 203).



Example 2. ***Communal niggun*** *to preface cantor's U-V'khein.*

Paramount in Zim's (and indeed any serious *baal t'fillah*'s) mind, is the rabbinic principle that music always enhances and underpins sacred text. Thus, as we would expect from the composer of the well-known setting, *Avinu ShebaShamayim, Tsur Yisra'eil V'-Go'alo* (Prayer for the State of Israel), this volume contains many lyrical and powerful gems that give promise of becoming equally popular. A prime example is the congregational anthem *Hashiveinu, Adonai, Eilekha* ("Return Us unto You, O God") sung as part of *Uv'-Nukho Yomar* ("And When the Ark of the Covenant Rested") at the Torah scroll's return to the Ark (Example 3; p. 136). Zim also uses this melody to open *Sh'ma Koleinu* ("Hear our Plea") within the S'lihot service of his upcoming Yom Kippur volume.



Example 3. *Hashiveinu-**communal anthem** sung at the Torah Scroll's return to the Ark (and also as introduction to Sh'ma Koleinu in the S'lihot service).*

This anthology introduces textual variants that appear in recent High Holiday mahzorim used by the American Conservative, Reconstructionist and Reform movements, although it is equally appropriate for use by traditional Orthodox congregations. Accentuation of Hebrew has been carefully cast to Modern Hebrew pronunciation, with deliberate occasional old-style Ashkenazi emphases in some of the Hasidic-style melodies. The book is a "must-have" for every *ba'al t'fillah.*

There are several drawbacks: the leather-style hardback cover which looks good but is difficult to keep open on a piano; and some typographical notation and word errors. It is to be hoped that on second printing these can be amended.

Jaclyn Chernett, who holds a Master of Philosophy in Music from City University and is an Associate of the London College of Music, is the first woman in the UK to be ordained as a hazzan—by the Academy for Jewish religion in Riverdale, New York. She is founder and director of the European Academy for Jewish Liturgy (EAJL), devoted to mentoring lay leaders of Jewish prayer.

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Excerpts of Moshe Ganchoff's Recorded High Holiday Services

Musique Internationale Cassettes: #575—Rosh Hashanah 1994, #576—Yom Kippur 1996, #577—Ne'ilah, 1993.

Reviewed by David B. Sislen

So much of the music written for *Yamim Nora'im* consists of easily recognizable liturgical passages like *Hin'ni, U-N'taneh Tokef, Kol Nidre*, that complex settings for them are the ones we hear most often on recordings as well. It is easy to forget that the bulk of the services for Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur is made up of more obscure liturgical material that is no less deserving of the hazzan's full attention and skill. In fact, some of the greatest hazzanim were renowned for their adept and sensitive handling of this liturgical mortar that holds the bricks of daven'n together.

While first-hand accounts of past masters who could move a congregation to tears with the simplest connective recitative still abound, the opportunity to actually hear stellar practitioners of this lost art nowadays is almost non-existent. Contemporary set pieces of hazzanut—with or without choral accompaniment—are engulfed by a sea of English readings, spontaneous sermonettes, shouted page numbers and regimented congregational singing that succeed only in impeding the flow of public prayer instead of helping to set its pace. Not subject to such distractions, these excerpted sections from three High Holiday services led by Cantor Moshe Ganchoff show us how it used to be done.

Ganchoff (1905-1997) was a master *zoger* (literally, a "teller"), unmatched in his ability to bring the Siddur and Mahzor to life. Using a deep knowledge of nusah and liturgy, a keen musical mind and a tremendous improvisational talent to make the words of the service leap off the bimah into the hearts and minds of the congregation, his skill earned him the apt title of "The Cantors' Cantor." So said the many thousands of New Yorkers who heard him sing his original compositions during a weekly radio program on radio station WEVD. Thanks to a trio of recordings released by Barry Serota on the Musique Internationale label, it is now possible to hear Ganchoff's davening, recorded live during the *Yamim Nora'im* of 1961.

As resident cantor for the High Holidays and Pesah at Grossinger's Resort near Ferndale, New York, Ganchoff led services there from 1957 until his retirement. Working with Ganchoff, Serota went through years of tapes that the Grossinger staff had made of events that took place on its stage, includ-

ing religious services. For this series of recordings Serota culled sections of the liturgy from Musaf on the second day of Rosh HaShanah, Musaf of Yom Kippur, and Ne'ilah. Accompaniment was provided by the Samuel Sterner Choir.

The recordings omit items that were performed solely by the choir, offering either recitatives that were sung solo by the cantor, or with the choir in a supporting role. The result is often mesmerizing. In the Malkhuyot-Zikhronot-Shofarot sections of the Musaf Amidah for Rosh HaShanah, for example, Ganchoff moves seamlessly through one prayer mode and hazzanic style after another, weaving them into a moving whole that never leaves interpretation of the words (*peirush ha-milot*) behind. The mood alternates between prayer and praise, minor and major, the vocal technique shifting from rapid-fire declamation to melismatic ornamentation, from intimate *parlando* to broad *cantilena*, and then on to the next thought without missing a beat. The more expressive sections are not presented as stand-alone arias, but rather as part of a whole, emphasized for purely liturgical reasons.

In call-and-response passages with the congregation, such as *Imru LEilohim* ("Say unto God") from Yom Kippur, he maintains a lightning-fast pace studded with melodic flourishes just long enough to vary the rhythm of the give-and-take, keeping it fresh and interesting. He does the same with *L'-Eil Oreikh Din* ("To God Who Sits in Judgement"; here included in Rosh HaShanah Musaf), allowing each strophe to stand out as an individual, unique statement, rather than as just another verse in a litany. He begins *V'-Khol Ma'aminim* ("And All Believe") the same way, but then inserts a meditative interlude beginning with the line *V'-Khol ma'aminim she-Hu tzaddik v'-yashar...* ("And all believe that He is just and righteous…"). The choir establishes a rhythmic accompaniment as Ganchoff sings a melody (composed by Abraham Ellstein) that crescendos on the word *u-ma'arikh* ("Who is slow…") and cuts off dramatically at the word *af* ("… to anger!").

Another musico-rhetorical device that catches the listener's attention and holds it fast occurs on the phrase *Adam y'sodo mei-afar* ("Man's origin is in dust") from the paragraph *Ki K'-Shimkha* ("Your Fame, like Your Name, Is Hallowed"). Ganchoff sings a two-octave descending chromatic scale on the opening line that perfectly symbolizes Man's return to dust. On Yom Kippur he sings a similar sequence on the words *v'-sofo le-afar* ("and his end is in dust"), and then at the bottom of his range, he dwells on the words to drive home the gravity of Man's ultimate fate. The Yom Kippur version also concludes with a delicate falsetto on the final words *v'kha-halom ya-uf* ("and as

a dream, he flies away") that ends suddenly, dramatizing the frailty of our life and how quickly it can disappear.

Knowledgeable listeners will appreciate the delicacy with which Ganchoff treats musical and interpretive ideas borrowed from other masters. In Ne'ilah, his *Ezk'ra Elohim V'-Ehemaya* ("Recalling This, O God, I Moan") opens with a gentle treatment of the first three stanzas, segués neatly into a powerful *Y'-hi Ratson... Shomei'a Kol Bikhyot* ("May it be Your Will… O Hearer of Weeping") and ends with a phrase from Zavel Kwartin's setting of the same passage. Kwartin is also quoted in the *Eileh Ezk'ra* ("These I Remember") from Yom Kippur Musaf, but in a different way. One gets the sense that Ganchoff is *telling* you the Martyrology story, rather than singing it. The music brings out every liturgical nuance, letting worshipers share the anguish of our Ten Martyred Sages in the 1st and 2nd centuries C.E. When Ganchoff arrives at *Tiheir Rabi Yishma'eil Atsmo* ("Rabbi Ishmael Purified Himself"), he again echoes Kwartin's phrases, but renders them with an air of uncertainty, as opposed to the original heroic version. His choice beautifully captures the sense of fear and dread that the character of Rabbi Ishmael feels at that point in the anonymously authored poetic narrative.

Not every element in these three cassettes hits a home run. The choir, though well directed, suffers from occasional pitch problems. The unpredictability factor of live recording is evident throughout. Listen closely and you'll hear an unexpected pause, a Hebrew error, a verse that is inadvertently repeated, a conversation from across the bimah that is unavoidably picked up by the microphone. These little glitches only add to the charm of the overall product, and remind us that we are listening to a real hazzan leading a real service. At one point, Ganchoff can be heard quietly humming to himself before modulating to a new key. At another, the choir comes in full voice and one hears a quick "Shh!" from someone, which is immediately heeded by the singers, who drop down to an instant *Pianissimo*.

These recordings represent more than a lasting testimony to Ganchoff's artistry. They give us the chance to travel back in time and relive a *Yamim Nora'im* experience that sadly, is no longer available to synagogue goers. Ganchoff imbued the traditional High Holiday liturgy with a full measure of hazzanut. This was not a service for show, or for the cantor to demonstrate his vocal abilities; it was a sensitive, well paced, artfully constructed and beautifully delivered whole. Yet it did not drag on. In an ironic twist, according to producer Barry Serota, the service needed to be completed by 1:00 pm in order for hotel guests to arrive at lunch on time (presumably, this limitation did not apply on Yom Kippur).

The phenomenon of a completely sung service with all poetic insertions (piyyutim) included is not something commonly encountered in our era of shrinking liturgy. This set of recordings is therefore a valuable educational tool for today's cantors and congregants alike. True, much has changed since Moshe Ganchoff's heyday almost a half-century ago, including the fact that Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur were observed in a Catskill Mountain resort rather than a synagogue. The fact that after all these years, his voice and deft touch with liturgical Hebrew can remain so incredibly evocative is a testament to the timelessness of Moshe Ganchoff's craft as a cantor and the depth of his devotion as an observant Jew. Thanks to Barry Serota and Musique Internationale, at least this one prayer experience will survive for posterity instead of becoming, like so many other live performances of a bygone era, *k'-ru'ah noshavet, ukh'-avak porei'ah, v'kha-halom ya'uf* ("like the wind that blows, like the dust that floats, and like the dream that vanishes").

David B. Sislen is the hazzan at Congregation B'nai Israel of St. Petersburg, Florida. He serves on the Membership Committee of the Cantors Assembly, and plays an essential role on the Editorial Board of the Journal of Synagogue Music. Barry Serota may be reached by phone at 847 259-7000, ext. 232.

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Meir Finkelstein's Orchestrated *Ne'ilah Service*
Reviewed by Sheldon Levin

From the haunting traditional motifs of the *Hatsi Kaddish* sung by cantor and choir, until the powerfully majestic repetitions of *Adonai Hu ha-Elohim* at the conclusion, Meir Finkelstein has brought his brilliant personal touch to the final service of *Yom Kippur*. His memorable melodies, choice of contemporary styles and harmonic creativity place these prayers securely within the 21st century.

I should begin by admitting that I am partial to Meir Finkelstein; Canadian Jewish choral conductor and arranger Stephen Glass calls him the "Mozart of our time." Finkelstein clearly speaks the musical languages of today. Some arrangements sound more like a film sound track than traditional synagogue settings of previous generations. He often quotes *MiSinai* tunes and traditional nusah, yet by changing the harmonies or adding new rhythms or instrumental accompaniment he breathes new life into these settings.

The new *Ne'ilah Service* was commissioned by Cantor Chayim Frenkel and Kehillat Israel Reconstructionist Congregation of Pacific Palisades. The vocal score and CD of the instrumental parts alone are available from congregation. As co-producer, Cantor Frenkel deserves a great deal of credit for the CD of the full service with soloists, cantors, chorus and instruments. In the past, Finkelstein and Frenkel have produced major new works in memory of the Holocaust and for victims of terror in Israel. Their 2-CD set of High Holy Day selections (both old and new) is also of the highest quality.

In the recording of this new *Ne'ilah Service* they effectively use both male and female soloists including several fine cantors: Meir Finkelstein, Chayim Frenkel, Joseph Gole, Don Gurney and Nathan Lam. The variety of musical styles, different vocal timbres and inclusion of Finkelstein's wholly instrumental "Fantasy for Cello and Piano" as well as selected meditations and introductions by the congregation's rabbis keep the CD both interesting and moving. The sound is beautiful, and the synagogue's choir is also quite impressive. While some of the pieces are musically complex, most of them could be performed by a volunteer choir, especially if a few of the vocal parts were taken down an octave, as they are on this recording.

I was most impressed by the *Sh'ma Yisrael/Barukh Sheim/Adonai Ehad* finale for cantor and chorus, replete with seventh chords, lots of surprising harmonies, a breath-taking modulation and a driving rhythm in the accompaniment. In this single masterful setting, Finkelstein shows his skill for taking a simple melody and turning it into a work of art. Many of the pieces are in the slow, contemplative mode one would expect to hear in the final hours of the Yom Kippur fast. *Hatsi Kaddish*, *Rahamana d'-Anei* and *Adonai Adonai* are serious compositions and—except for some new harmonies and the keyboard accompaniment—could have been written by European cantorial masters of the past two centuries. *P'tah Lanu Sha'ar* is a fine example; while setting the text traditionally, it moves the service forward musically.

Finkelstein does not limit himself to an entire service of "heavy" music. If *V'-Al Kulam* were sung in English, it could easily pass for a Pop hit. *Enkat M'saldekha* is in the style of a Zionist anthem and *Sim Shalom/B'-Seifer Hayyim* is reminiscent of Broadway musicals like *Les Miz* or *Jekyll and Hyde*. And I challenge anyone not to smile while a child and cantor sing an uplifting, spirited duet to the words of *L'-Dor va-Dor*.

As cantor of a congregation that does not use instruments on Shabbat or Yom Tov, this reviewer wonders whether the broad spectrum of Conservative worshipers would miss opportunities to daven and participate in this service. Might they instead feel as if they were attending a concert? Perhaps

in communities where instruments are used regularly and new music is easily accepted, this would be a wonderful way to conclude Yom Kippur. I think that congregants who are used to a more traditional Ne'ilah service would find some of the settings jarring to their prayer experience.

Having said that, I still wish that Finkelstein and Frenkel would apply the same magic they brought to Ne'ilah and works commemorating the Shoah and honoring the State of Israel, to the pre-Rosh Hashanah S'lihot service. Conservative congregations are increasingly permitting the use of musical instruments at that service, which is not held on a holy day, and congregants are generally more open to a new and different experience at S'lihot than they are during the *Yamim Nora'im* proper.

In sum, Meir Finkelstein's orchestrated *Ne'ilah Service* is brilliantly conceived and produced, and congregations that allow instruments and welcome new compositions will be enthralled by it.

Sheldon Levin is a past president of the Cantors Assembly, and has served as cantor and educational director for congregations in Philadelphia, PA and Metuchen, New Jersey for over thirty years. He has edited seven books on Jewish music and education, conducts several choirs and has taught at Conservative day schools, Ramah summer camps and the National Jewish Choral Festival.

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A Fusion of Traditions—Liturgical Music in the Copenhagen Synagogue, by Jane Mink Rossen and Uri Sharvit

Reviewed by Charles Heller

This volume, published by the University Press of Southern Denmark, 2006, is part of an academic series on the folk music of Denmark, which explains its scope and methodology. It gives a picture of the music of the Copenhagen Synagogue through an analysis of two representative services (Rosh HaShanah and Simhat Torah—with an accompanying CD and detailed music transcriptions) as well as a history of the Danish Jewish community and a history and photos of Danish cantors and choirs. In order to be a comprehensive survey of Jewish music, the book also includes a detailed analysis of Shofar calls and of Torah reading. Unfortunately, this will probably prove baffling for non-Jewish

musicologists and tedious for the Jewish ones, although there is an interesting discussion on the expressive nature of Western Ashkenazi trop.

There are many musical gems described in this book which will be of interest to lovers of western European nusah: a prayer for the Royal Family, a tuneful setting of *Halleluyah* (Psalm 150), a simple tune for *An'im Zemirot*, and two pieces from Simhat Torah—the Hatsi Kaddish and an abridged version of *An'im Zemirot* which runs through the leitmotifs of the whole year in the manner of a *Yahres-Kaddish*—the Kaddish Shaleim sung at Ma'ariv of Simhat Torah in the Western Ashkenazic tradition.

The problem however is that publication by a university press has made the authors overly academic in their presentation, so that the music examples are presented as ethnomusicological specimens: they are full of all the irregular note lengths, bar lengths, pitches, etc. that the performers actually sang. If you wanted to teach these melodies to your own shul choir you would have to rewrite them. Even so, the transcriptions are not completely reliable: for example, the ending of the *Mei-R'shut* for the Hatan Torah (ex. 11: 11) is obviously meant to sound like the one for the Hatan B'reishit (ex. 12: 15), but the rather flat top F in ex. 11: 11 has been transcribed as E, which throws a whole different light on the nature of the mode. This is always the danger in ethnomusicological transcription: was the music itself poorly performed rather than being a worthwhile model?

The authors have presented their work around a central thesis, that the Copenhagen nusah is the result of a fusion of many traditions from different communities—hence the title of this volume. This idea is indeed valuable, but it might have been preferable to focus on a few key examples rather than burying this idea in a mass of minute details more suitable for a dissertation. This fusion is the by-product of historical changes that are comprehensively described. The cross-connections between different communities have given rise to what the authors call a "national music" of European Jewry. In this book there are some Copenhagen melodies that will be familiar to people in Britain and elsewhere, for example, the "long tune" for Priestly *Dukhen'n*, the *Ashrei* following Shofar blowing, and the *An'im Zemirot* for Simhat Torah. A very important side-story described in this book is the role of the Danish government in dictating the content of services. This has affected the development of Reform services and the reaction of the Orthodox, a process that has had parallels in other European countries.

Students of nusah owe a tremendous debt to the late Chief Rabbi Marcus Melchior for permitting archival recordings to be made during services in

the 1960s, and to the University Press of Southern Denmark for publishing this valuable record of authentic European nusah.

A frequent contributor to the Journal, Charles Heller recently completed 30 years as Choir Director at Beth Emeth Synagogue, Toronto. His most recent publication is ***What To Listen For in Jewish Music*** *(Toronto: Ecanthus Press, 2006 www.ecanthuspress.com)*

Point/Counterpoint:

(1) Emanuel Rubin and John H. Baron's *Music in Jewish History and Culture*,

Harmonie Park Press, Sterling Heights, Michigan, 2006, 405 pp.

Reviewed by Jack Chomsky

This survey of sources, content and trends in Jewish music is designed, according to its authors, as "both a college text and an informative guide for the lay reader." The authors are professors at University of Massachusetts, Amherst (Dr. Rubin—Judaic Studies and Music History) and Tulane University (Dr. Baron—Music).

After an Introduction and the inevitable Prelude, "What Is Jewish Music?" Professors Rubin and Baron lay out 15 chapters under the following headings:

Background and Orientation
Music in the Bible
The Greco-Roman World
Cantillation
Jewish Music in the World of Medieval Islam
Secular Music of the Jews in Christian Europe in the Middle Ages
Synagogue Music from the Destruction of the Temple to 1800
The Cantor of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries
Music of the Yiddish-Speaking World in the 19th and 20th Centuries
Secular Jewish Musicians of Modern Europe
The History and Development of Jewish Liturgical Music in America
Secular Jewish Music and Musicians in North America
Music of the Holocaust
Creation of a National Music Prior to Israeli Statehood
Music in Modern Israel

In addition to a Postlude—What We Have Seen—the authors include a number of Historical Interludes in between chapters: "The Great Diaspora," "The Haskalah," and "Trauma and Triumph in the Middle Twentieth Century." A complete Bibliography follows, but the handy *Suggestions for Further Reading* that appear after every chapter are more likely to prove of sustained use to cantors and others who study and transmit Jewish traditions.

Readers of this journal will be particularly interested to discover what the authors have to say about hazzanim while singling out the ones they consider

to have been leading trend setters. In that respect, I found myself taking a certain amount of pride in the authors' acknowledgements of gratitude to the late Cantor Mordecai Heiser (Pittsburgh), Cantors Saul Altschuler (Milwaukee) and Alex Zimmer (Boston) along with others of my acquaintance, in helping them shape their appreciation and understanding of the nature and importance of Jewish music.

One is struck by the sense that the authors are insiders writing about Jewish music and culture from a deep and personal understanding, so when they describe what happens in the synagogue, they are able to place things in their proper context. For example, they advise newcomers that while most synagogues welcome visitors, it would be wise not to drop in without advance notice during the High Holy Days, as seats are not readily available on those days. They caution potential visitors about the average length of services on other occasions— ninety minutes to three hours on Saturday mornings—depending on the congregation's denomination. Their initial description of the role of the "chazzan" is worth citing verbatim (p. 13).

> A large urban congregation will usually engage a full-time *chazzan*, a singer employed as cantor, or leader of the service, whose role is probably better understood from the Hebrew name for the position: *shaliach tzibbur* (representative of the public)—that is, one who "represents" the congregation with his/her own voice in prayer. This personage is also hired by the congregation and is of more specific interest here because the position encompasses everything that might touch on religious music. The *chazzan* is usually a professionally trained singer chosen for his/her piety, knowledge of the service, and musical ability. The job description calls for leading the singing of traditional melodies and/or composing new melodies for worship, teaching all aspects of music (e.g., hymns, prayer melodies, cantillation), chanting the special prayers for wedding, funerals, and appropriate public occasions, being responsible for the organization and performance of subsidiary worship music, such as that performed by the organist, choir, a soloist, etc., overseeing the music curriculum of the synagogue school, and being knowledgeable about all aspects of Jewish music—that is, sufficiently acquainted with music theory, history, and performance to function as the synagogue's respected liaison with the professional musical community. The ideal *chazzan* is supposed to be a devoutly religious person with a glorious voice, a skilled professional musician with the patience to teach young children, a diplomat, conductor, composer, and to top it all off, a tireless performer who can sing the equivalent of full operatic performances on each of the High Holy Days in quick succession (on *Yom Kippur* that is the equivalent of several operas

in twenty-four hours without food or water). This is not a job for the weak of body or spirit.

The chapter on Cantillation is accessible even to the non-Torah reader and consistent with actual practice, although I found a figure on page 78 (Fig. 4.4) to be confusing. As a demonstration of the way *te'amim* (the word preferred by the authors because of the potential confusion inherent in using the word "accents") deliver the flow of words in a sentence, the Hebrew text is given in transliteration, reading left to right, while the trope signs are unchanged, reading right to left. (One might conceivably use *te'amim* with English transliteration, but reverse the signs so they also read from left to right.) In any event, one would hardly use this book to teach cantillation—but rather, to teach a little *about* cantillation.

While on the subject of cantillation, I did notice a reference in the bibliography to Suzanne Haik-Vantoura's *The Music of the Bible Revealed: The Deciphering of a Millennary Notation*, yet I found no evidence of her claims in Rubin and Baron's book. Of greater concern is the fact that I have found her supposed discoveries to be entirely suspect. What I saw and heard from Haik-Vantoura seemed to represent the speculations of an outsider who hasn't a clue about the way Jewish biblical texts have been rendered and understood in diverse communities for centuries. It's not that one must be Jewish to understand the nature of cantillation, simply that if you wish to promulgate theories that concern *historical* performance, you had better know something about a universal *current* practice that is common to Jewish communities everywhere. For this, an intimate knowledge of Biblical Hebrew would be indispensable.

The book's greatest use to *Journal of Synagogue Music* readers might be as a reliable source of scholarship and history in areas peripheral to their own expertise. Thus in a section entitled *Music as a Jewish Profession* in the chapter "Secular Music of the Jews in Christian Europe," we visit the ways in which Jews were part of the fabric of the music of 15th-century Germany. The story of the *Lochamer Liederbuch* ("Locheim Songbook," pp. 115-116) typifies many epochs in which Jewish musicians were deeply engaged at the heart of a nation's culture. This fact has unfortunately been denied or at least obscured by later generations.

Appropriate attention is paid to significant Jewish composers, particularly the Viennese cantor, Salomon Sulzer (1804-1890), whose artistry flourished despite the limitations necessarily placed on music expressly written for use in the synagogue. Also of interest—though misinformed—is the information that the "Leoni" melody for the hymn *Yigdal*, one of the few synagogue tunes

found in Christian hymnals (as "The God of Abraham Praise") is so named because it was composed by Meyer Lyon (ca. 1755-1797), *cantor* of the Great Synagogue of London (pp. 148-149).

> Leoni's melody was given a larger audience by Wesleyan cleric Thomas Olivers (1725-99), who heard the *chazzan* sing it, and liked the song so much that he set English words to it as the hymn, "The God of Abraham Praise"… The melody became so well known in eighteenth-century London that it soon popped up as a soldiers' drinking song with an entirely different text: "Now pass the glass around."

Lyon actually served as the Great Synagogue's leading *chorister*, while Isaac Polack was its cantor from 1746 to 1802, the longest-tenured hazzan in Anglo-Jewish history.[1]

The authors' description of music's evolution in the 19th-century European synagogue is both thorough and impressive. Their accounts of the careers and repertoire of figures like Chayim Wasserzug, Nissen Blumenthal, Moritz Friedmann, Josef Singer and many others whet one's appetite to see more of the manuscripts—perhaps in the form of future uploads to the Internet.

The wealth of sources and analysis of the importance of Yiddish songs in the chapter "Music of the Yiddish-Speaking World in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries" is also laudable—presenting a great deal of material from a variety of contexts in a concise and coherent way. Several elements of this chapter are worthy of books on their own—some have indeed been the subjects of book-length studies and are listed in the various *Suggestions for Further Reading*: Y.L. Cahan's *Yiddish Folksongs with Melodies*, Neil Levin's *Songs of the American Jewish Experience*, Henry Sapoznik's *Klezmer! Jewish Music from Old World to Our World*, to mention a few. It is rare to find a description of the variety of Yiddish music as comprehensive as the one found here.

One peculiarity of the book is a certain redundancy. Chapter 8, "The Cantor of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," overlaps considerably with Chapter 11, "The History and Development of Jewish Liturgical Music in America," which covers the 18th to 21st centuries. Nevertheless, the opportunity to traverse related areas twice—initially through focus on the individuals who transmitted the tradition, and then through focus on the tradition itself—helps to fill out the total picture.

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1 Daniel Tunkel, "Music of the Anglo-Jewish Synagogue Tradition," unpublished Notes to Accompany a Workshop Session, *18th Annual North American Jewish Choral Festival,* Hudson Valley Resort, Kerhonkson, NY, July 8-12, 2007, p. 2.

I highly recommend *Music in Jewish History and Culture* as a valuable reference for quick overview and as an authoritative text for in-depth study.

Jack Chomsky has served as hazzan at Congregation Tifereth Israel in Columbus, Ohio, since 1982. He edited the ***Journal of Synagogue Music*** *from 1988 to 1994, co-edited the* ***50th Anniversary Jubilee Journal*** *of the Cantors Assembly with Solomon Mendelson in 1998, and is the Assembly's current Vice-President.*

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(2) Charles Heller's *What to Listen For In Jewish Music,*

Toronto, Ecanthus Press, 2006, 298 pp.

Reviewed by Robert S. Scherr

Charles Heller, composer, arranger, musicologist, and conductor, has been a major personality in Jewish music for many years. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could sit in Heller's living room and get him to unpack his expertise on this vast subject! Next-best, perhaps, is to leaf through this new book of his. Informal and accessible, it discusses a number of important themes ranging from folk influences on prayer chant and biblical cantillation to the musical poetry of Psalms and the professional role of the cantor. Readers will find personal musings and explanations interwoven throughout with scholarly delving into what lies beneath the surface.

Since he is writing about "Jewish Music," Heller must first define what he means by that term, a confusing appellation that many have tried unsuccessfully to define. He refers to Eric Werner (*A Voice Still Heard*), who felt that the question *what is Jewish music*? is "eternally silly." He cites Abraham Idelsohn's phrase, "spiritual nationality" as a useful way to establish that Jewish music reflects the cultures in which Jews lived. Heller concludes that Jewish music is "preserved by Jews for a Jewish purpose… music created by Jews… music uniquely developed by Jews" (p. 33).

Anyone engaged in teaching general classes on the subject might benefit from Heller's approach to explaining basic nusah—the prescribed modalities for sacred chant throughout the year. He does well to point out how in other religious traditions as well, the formulae of liturgy recitative are a matter of both melody and text, in response to a variety of occasions (p. 180).

"Jewish music has always been perceived as being exotic and colorful," Heller says (p. 76). He reminds us that colorful means *chromatic*, and suggests that such *wild* music as the Middle-Eastern modes of Jewish synagogue and folk traditions (or jazz, for that matter) exist on the margins of the larger society. Even in the 3rd century, he points out, Clement of Alexandria warned early Christians

> not to expose oneself to the powerful influence of exciting and langorous modes, which by the curve of their melodies lead to effeminacy and infirmity of purpose. Let us leave chromatic harmonies to banquets where no one ever blushes at music crowned with flowers and harlotry.[2]

Heller suggests that in the Middle Ages, Jewish musicians were admired for performing music that incorporated the unusual chromatic scales. In 19th-century England, John Braham and Isaac Nathan arranged a series of synagogue tunes (*Hebrew Melodies*) in the contemporary style, with lyrics especially written for them by Lord Byron. Nathan referred to his melodies as possessing "a certain wildness," which appealed to those who sought the *exotic* in Jewish music. Twentieth-century American songwriter Cole Porter once told composer Richard Rogers that his most successful numbers, with constant chromatic shifting from major to minor, were "Jewish tunes."[3]

Heller's section on "Close-ups" focuses on *Hatikvah* (and its relationship to well-known folk melodies), *Kol Nidre* (comparing how it is sung in various communities), musical settings of the *Kaddish*, and the ever-popular *Hava Nagila*. His sections on the influence of folk and popular traditions include Klezmer, Yiddish, and Ladino contributions to the treasury of Jewish music.

He includes an extensive Bibliography, Glossary, and Index. One might wish that there were also a Discography, though Heller suggests that so much music is being recorded that any such listing would immediately become dated. Endnotes appear after each chapter, but they would have proven more helpful had they been *numbered* for better reference. The writing's lightness of tone and sparkling wit will appeal to a wide audience, including those possessing the most basic level of musical knowledge. Yet this reader was left feeling that certain areas deserved a more rigorous treatment, namely, the historical development of synagogue and folk music, and how the *Jewishness* of our music has contended with outside influences. Nonetheless, Heller's informed guid-

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2 Quoted in Stevens and Robertson, *The Pelican History of Music,* Vol 1.

3 Alexander Chancellor, in a *New York Times Book Review* article from November 29, 1998 on William McBrien's *Cole Porter*.

ance through the byways of Jewish music should provide a fulfilling journey for those who love to read about this ever-provocative subject.

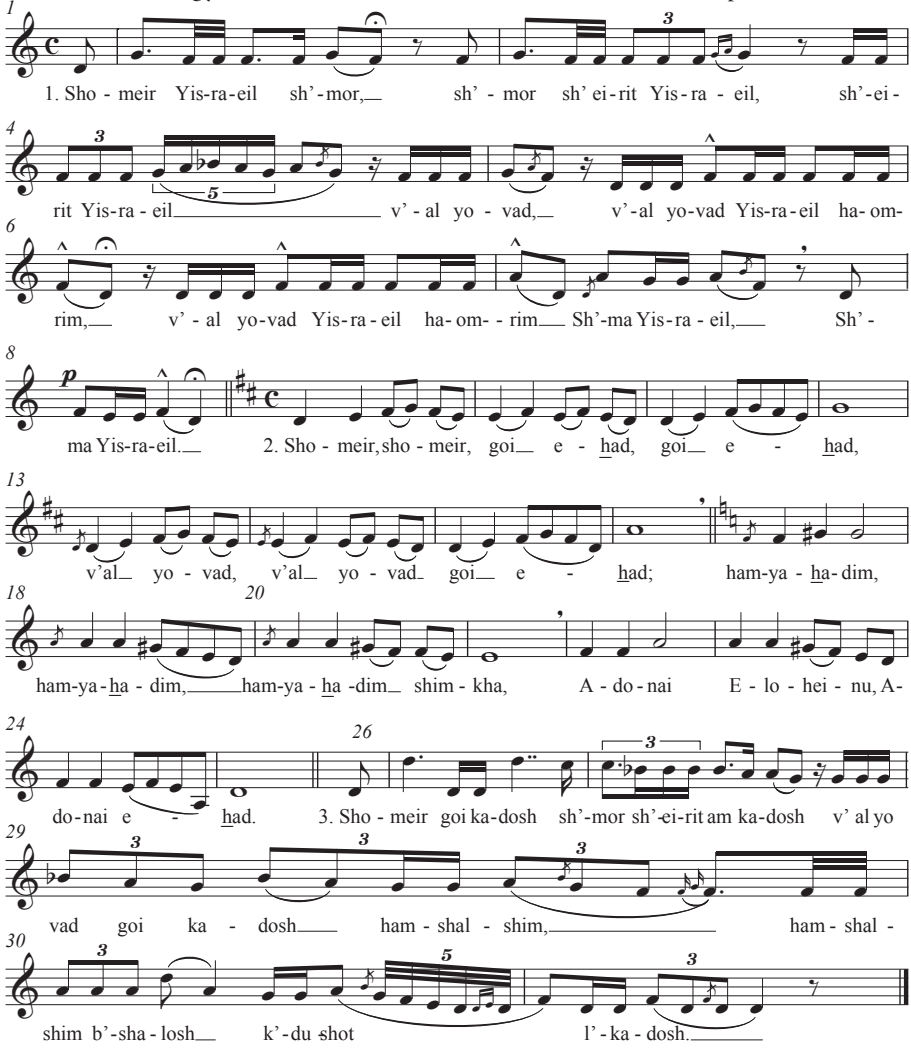
Robert S. Scherr is Hazzan Emeritus of Temple Israel in Natick, Massachusetts. He currently serves as the Jewish Chaplain for Williams College, in Williamstown, Massachusetts, and as Chair of Placement and Human Resources for the Cantors Assembly. His review, ***Zamru Lo—The Next Generation,*** *edited by Jeffrey Shiovitz, appeared in the 2005 Journal of Synagogue Music.*

Six High Holiday Settings by Israeli Composers—at Israel's 60th

I. Shomeir Yisra'eil

Yehudah Leib Glantz
Text: S'lihot Liturgy

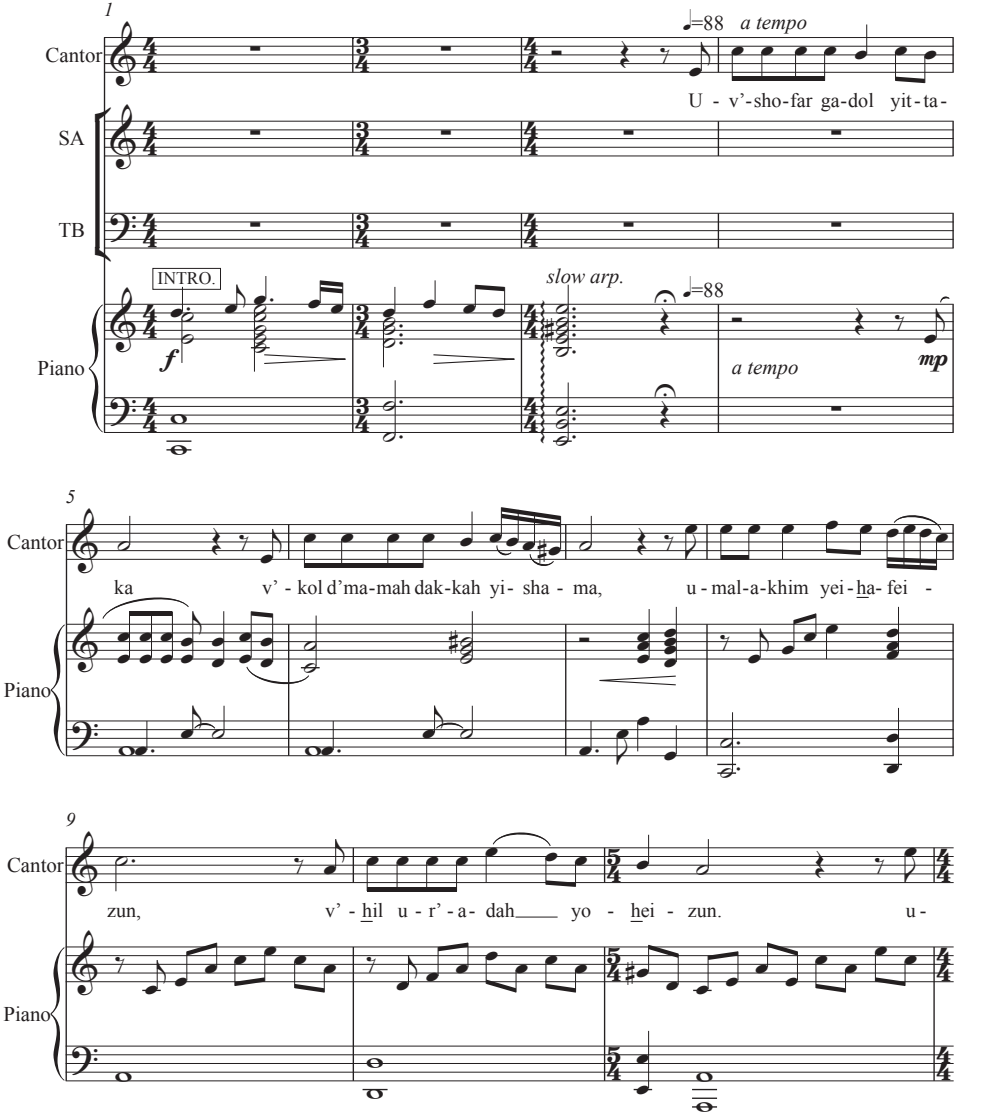
after *Chasidim B'rinah* (recorded 1947)
and *Rinat HaKodesh* (published 1965)

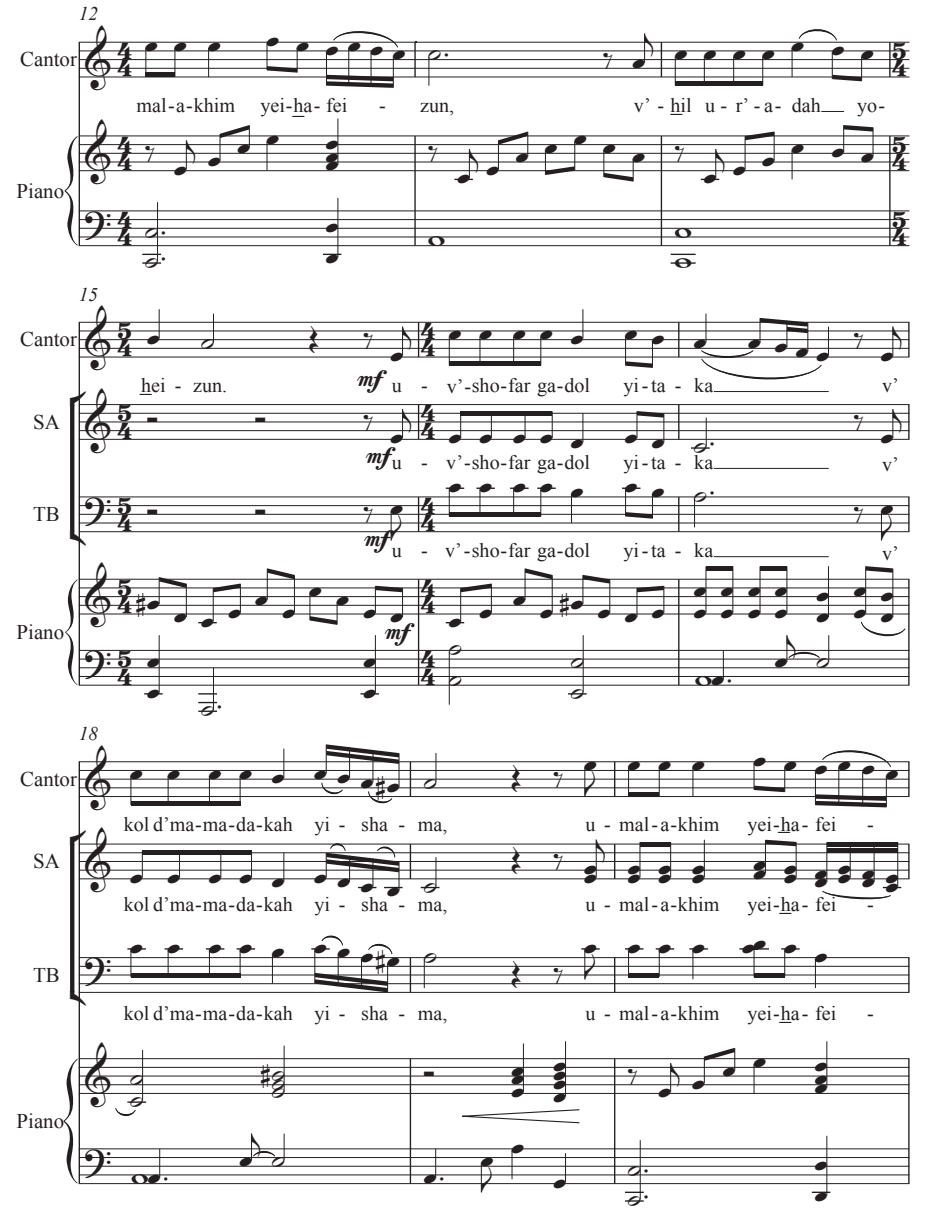


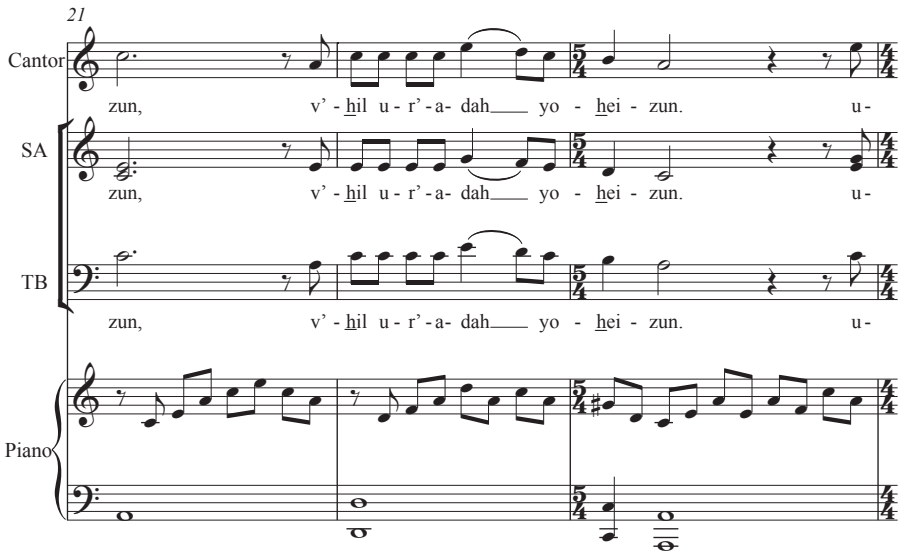
II. Uv'-Shofar Gadol Yi-Taka

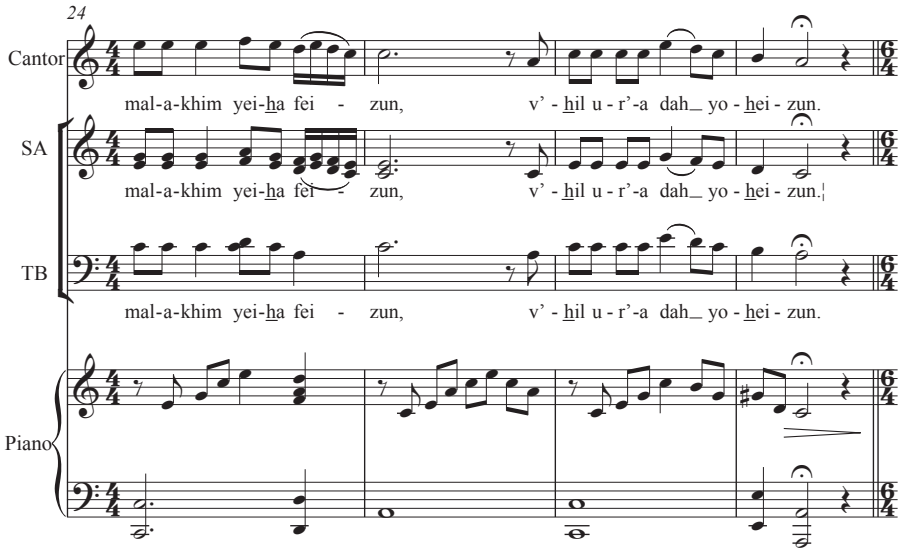
Text: High Holiday Musaf Liturgy
Kalonymus ben Meshullam, 11th Cent.

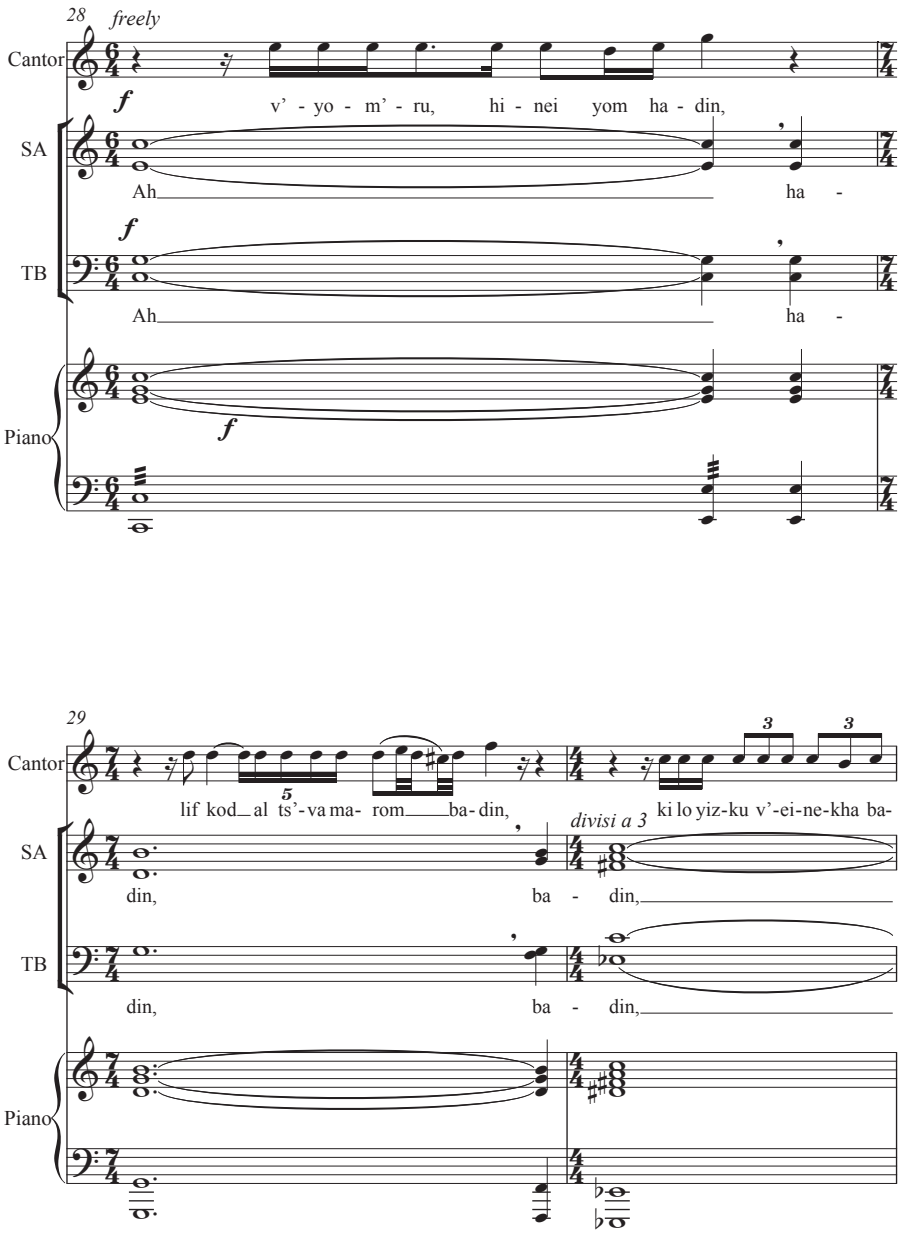
Music: after Yair Rosenblum, 1998

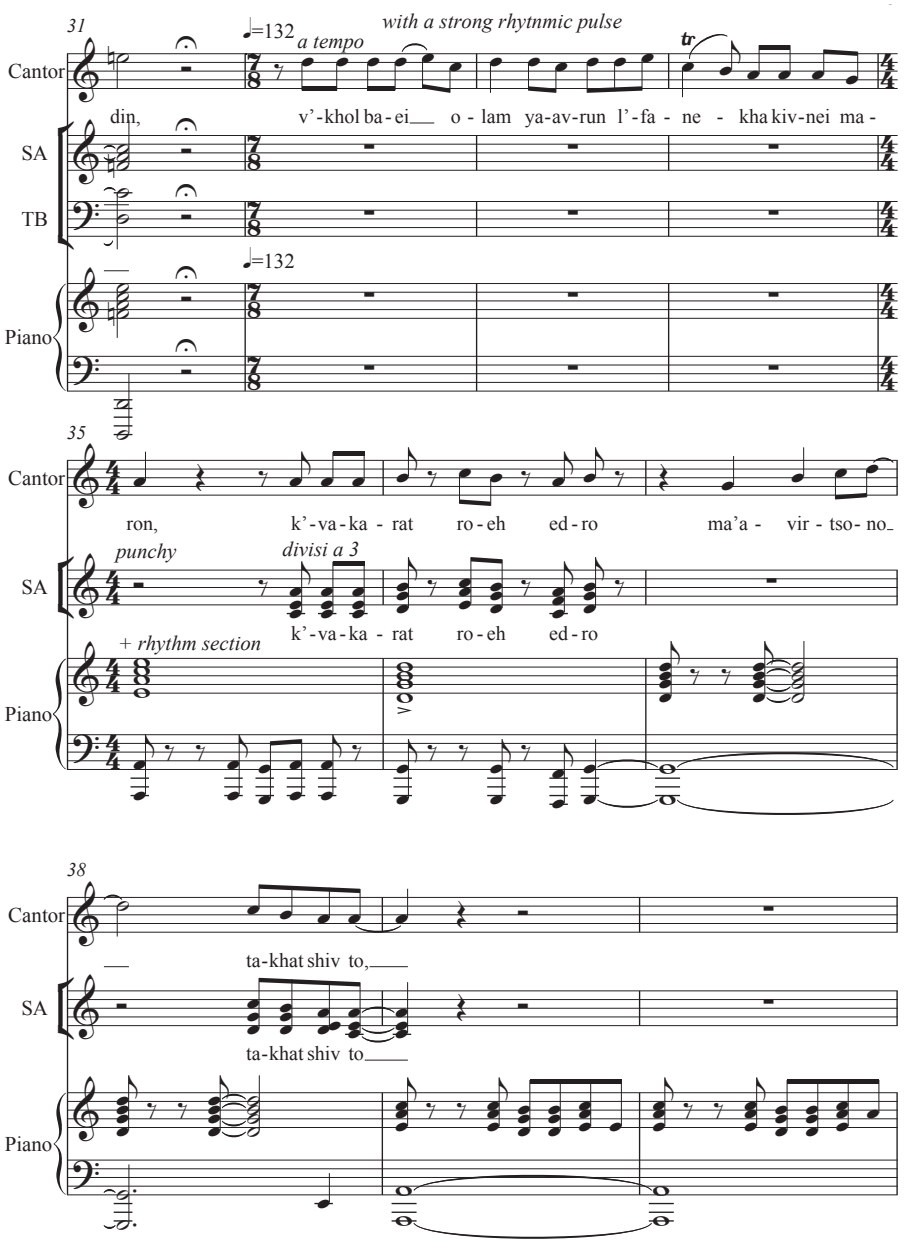


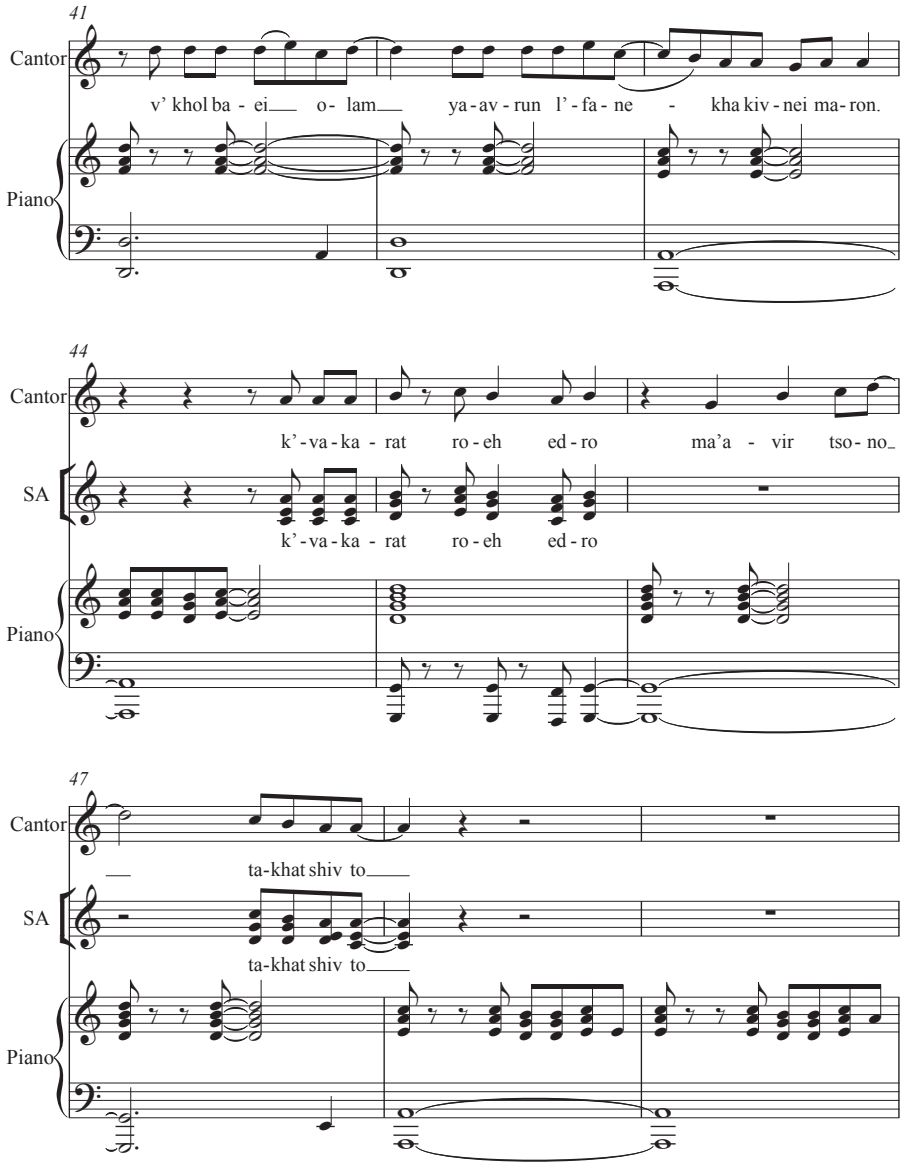

12
Cantor
mal-a-khim yei-ha-fei - zun, v'-hil u-r'-a-dah yo-
Piano
15
Cantor
hei - zun. mf u - v'-sho-far ga-dol yi-ta-ka v'
SA
mf u - v'-sho-far ga-dol yi-ta-ka v'
TB
mf u - v'-sho-far ga-dol yi-ta-ka v'
Piano
mf
18
Cantor
kol d'ma-ma-da-kah yi - sha - ma, u - mal-a-khim yei-ha-fei -
SA
kol d'ma-ma-da-kah yi - sha - ma, u - mal-a-khim yei-ha-fei -
TB
kol d'ma-ma-da-kah yi - sha - ma, u - mal-a-khim yei-ha-fei -
Piano

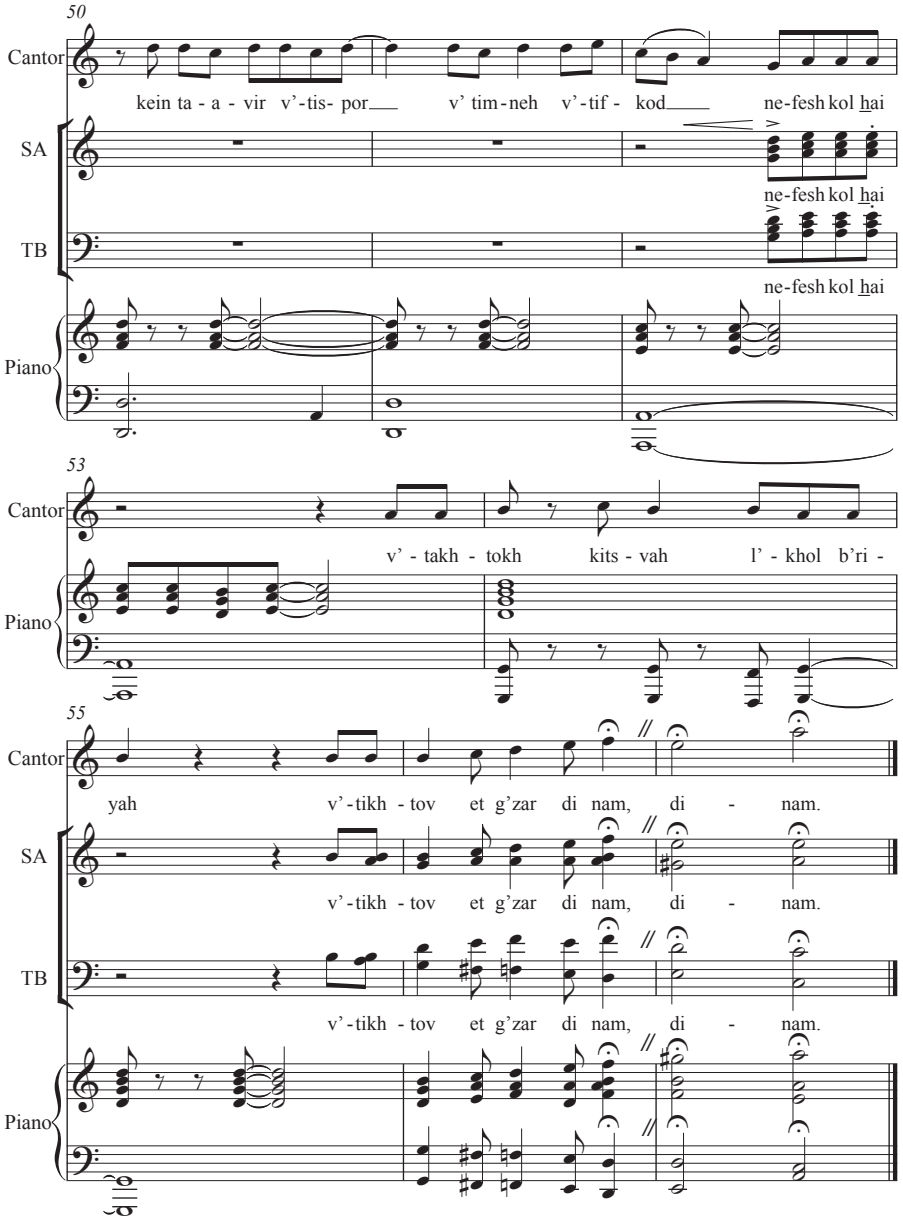

21
Cantor
SA
TB
Piano
zun, v' - hil u - r' - a- dah yo - hei - zun. u -
zun, v' - hil u - r' - a- dah yo - hei - zun. u -
zun, v' - hil u - r' - a- dah yo - hei - zun. u -


24
Cantor
SA
TB
Piano
mal-a-khim yei-ha fei - zun, v' - hil u - r'-a dah yo - hei - zun.
mal-a-khim yei-ha fei - zun, v' - hil u - r'-a dah yo - hei - zun.
mal-a-khim yei-ha fei - zun, v' - hil u - r'-a dah yo - hei - zun.


28
freely
Cantor
f
v' - yo - m' - ru, hi - nei yom ha - din,
SA
Ah
ha -
f
TB
Ah
ha -
Piano
f
29
Cantor
5
lif kod al ts'-va ma- rom ba- din,
3
3
ki lo yiz-ku v'-ei-ne-kha ba-
divisi a 3
SA
din,
ba - din,
TB
din,
ba - din,
Piano

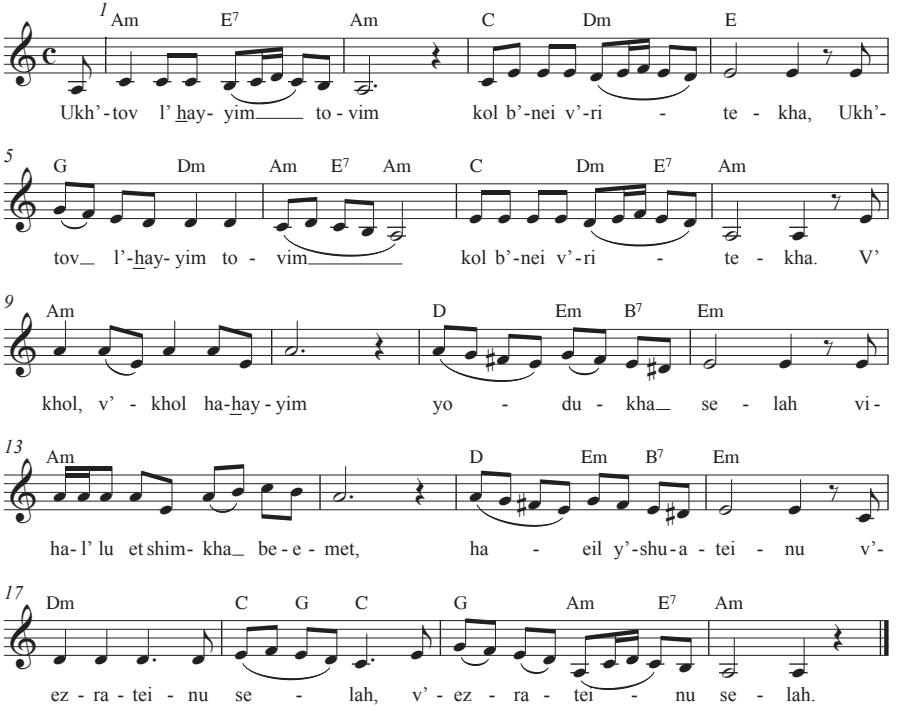

31
♩=132
a tempo
with a strong rhytnmic pulse
Cantor
SA
TB
Piano
din,
v'-khol ba-ei o-lam ya-av-run l'-fa-ne-kha kiv-nei ma-
35
ron,
k'-va-ka-rat ro-eh ed-ro
ma'a-vir-tso-no
punchy
divisi a 3
+ rhythm section
k'-va-ka-rat ro-eh ed-ro
38
ta-khat shiv to,
ta-khat shiv to


41
Cantor
v' khol ba - ei o - lam ya - av - run l' - fa - ne - kha kiv - nei ma - ron.
Piano
44
Cantor
k' - va - ka - rat ro - eh ed - ro ma'a - vir tso - no_
SA
k' - va - ka - rat ro - eh ed - ro
Piano
47
Cantor
ta-khat shiv to
SA
ta-khat shiv to
Piano


50
Cantor
kein ta - a - vir v'-tis- por v' tim-neh v'-tif - kod ne-fesh kol hai
SA
ne-fesh kol hai
TB
ne-fesh kol hai
Piano
53
Cantor
v' - takh - tokh kits - vah l' - khol b'ri -
Piano
55
Cantor
yah v'-tikh - tov et g'zar di nam, di - nam.
SA
v'-tikh - tov et g'zar di nam, di - nam.
TB
v'-tikh - tov et g'zar di nam, di - nam.
Piano

III. U-Kh'tov L'-Hayyim—V'Khol Ha-Hayyim

Text: Amidah for the Ten Days of Penitence Music: after Dudu Shani
Published by OR-TAV Music Publications

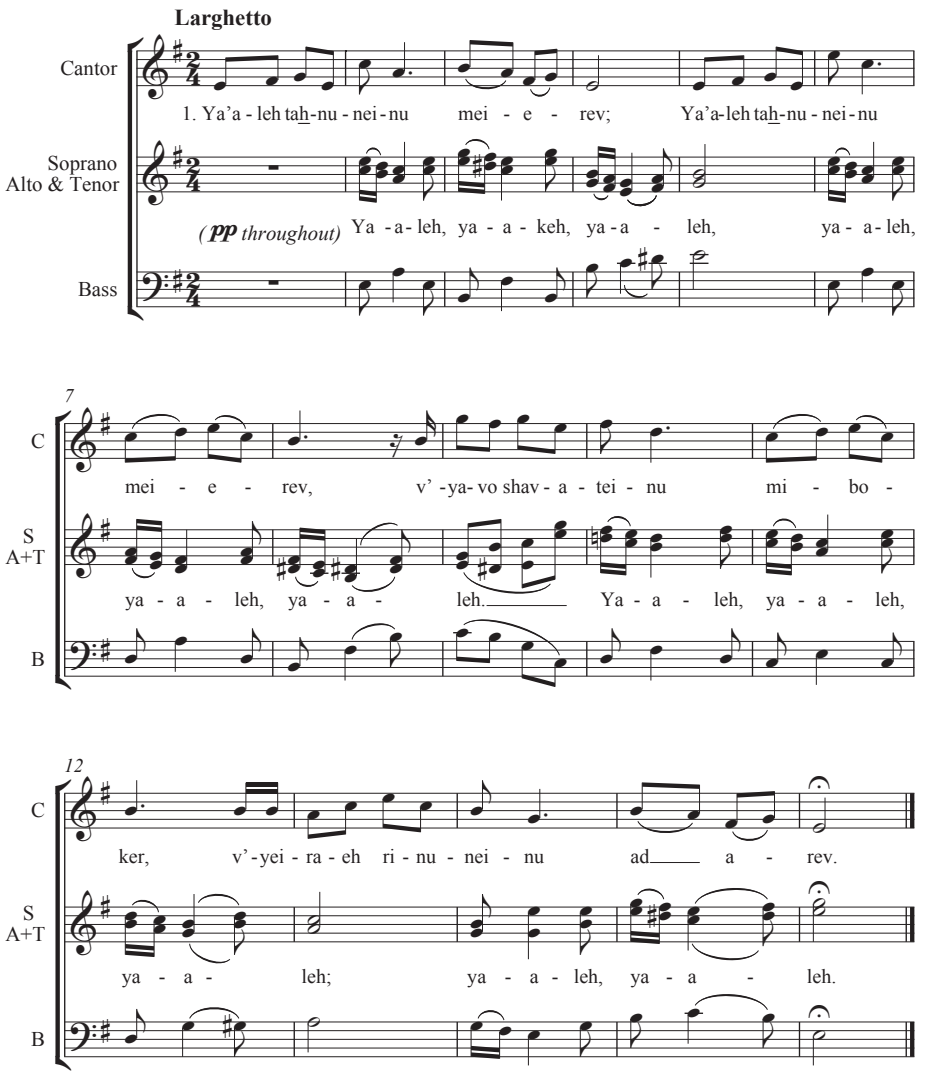


from Dudu Shanu, *Mul Chalon Beteinu, collected pieces,*
OR-TAV Music Publications, 2006.

IV. Ya'aleh

Text: Kol Nidre Night Liturgy

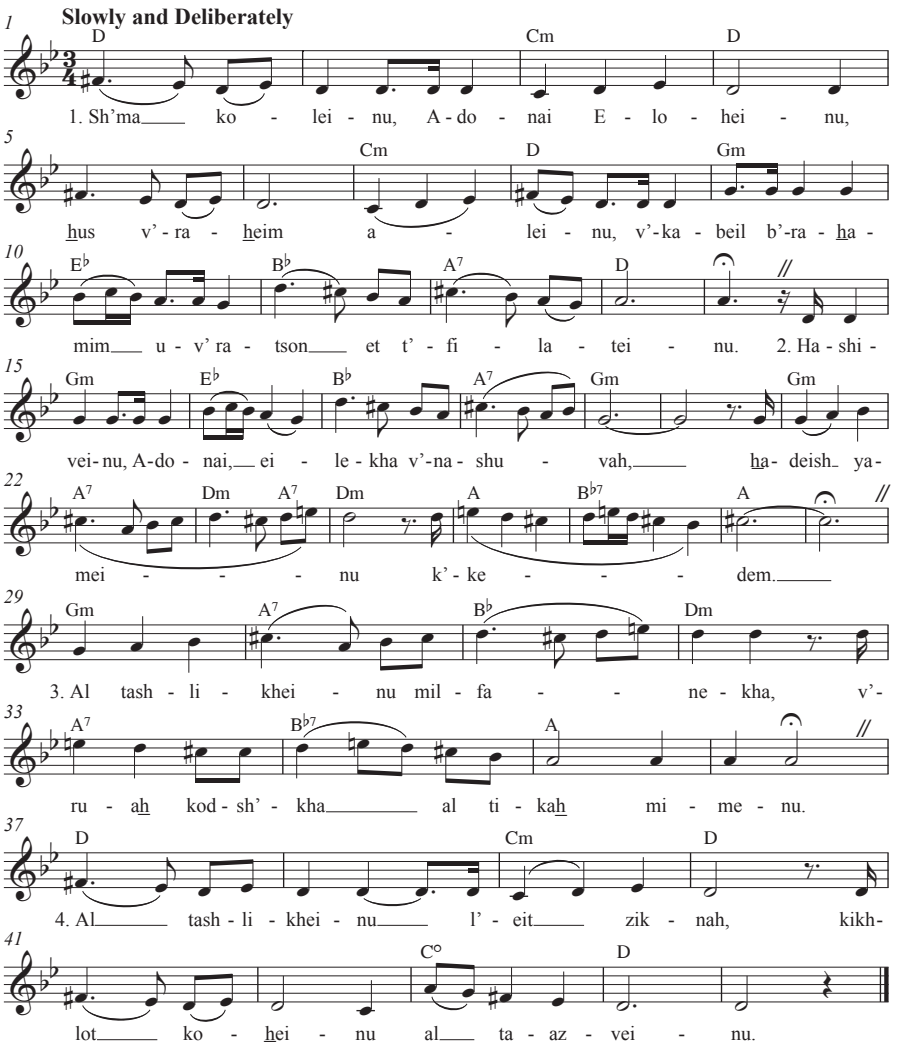
Music: M. Baharav
(*B'-Arvot HaNegev,* 1948)
arrangement: Joseph Levine



V. Sh'ma Koleinu

Text: Kol Nidre Night Liturgy
Published by OR-TAV Music Publications

Music: after Dudu Shani

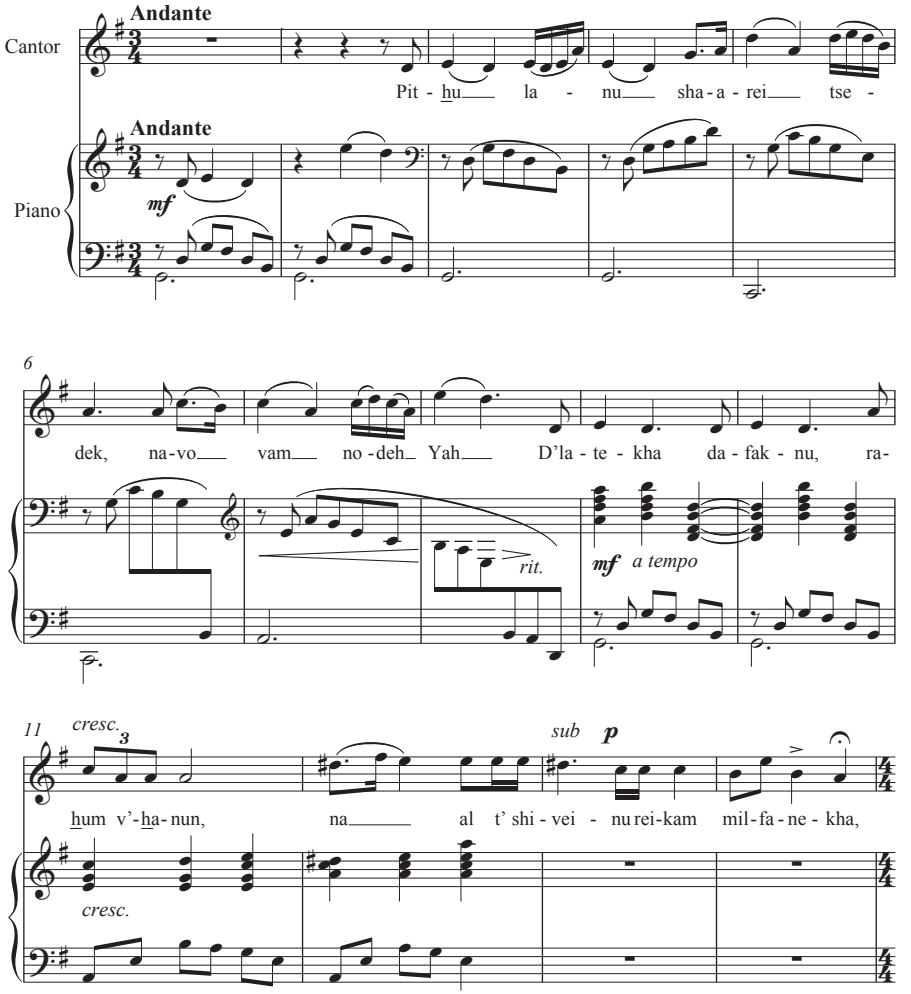


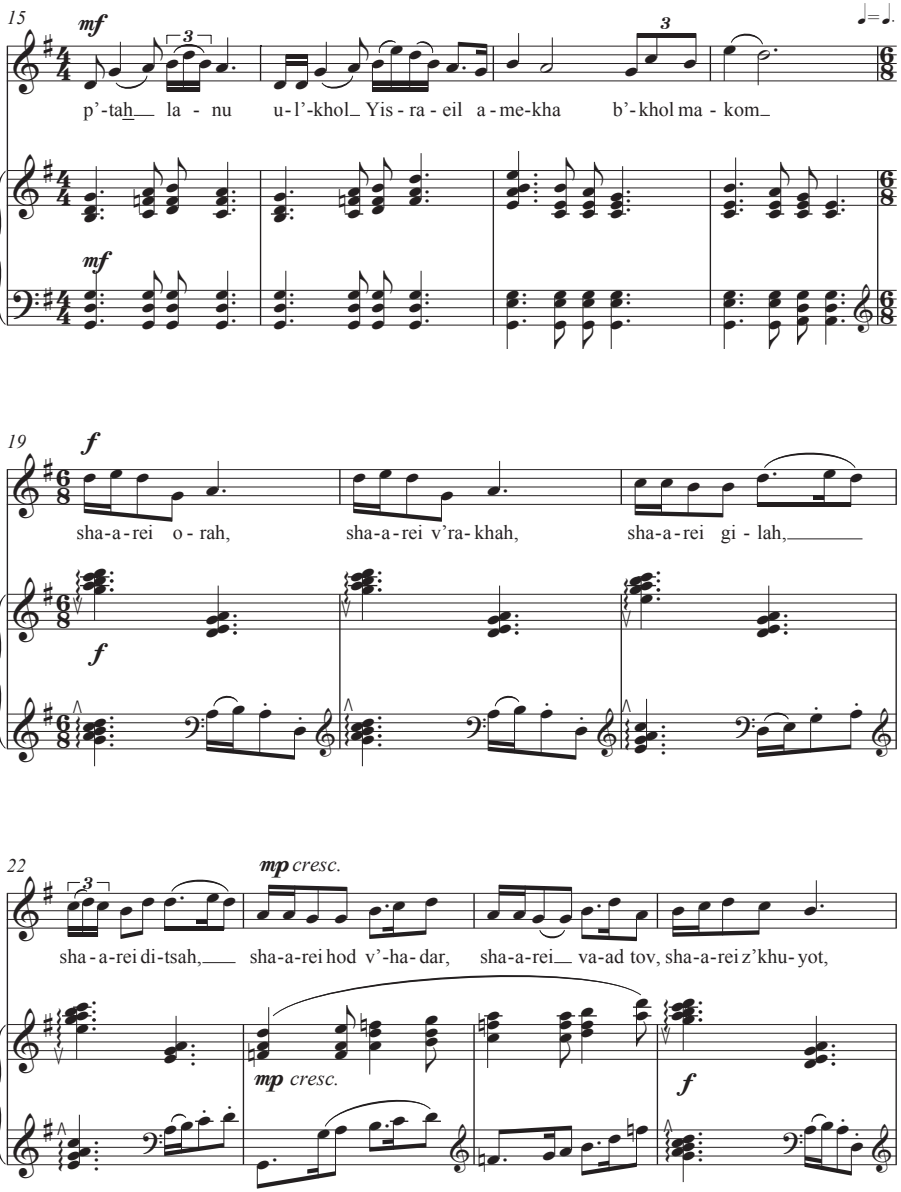
from Dudu Shanu, *Mul Chalon Beteinu, collected pieces,*
OR-TAV Music Publications, 2006.

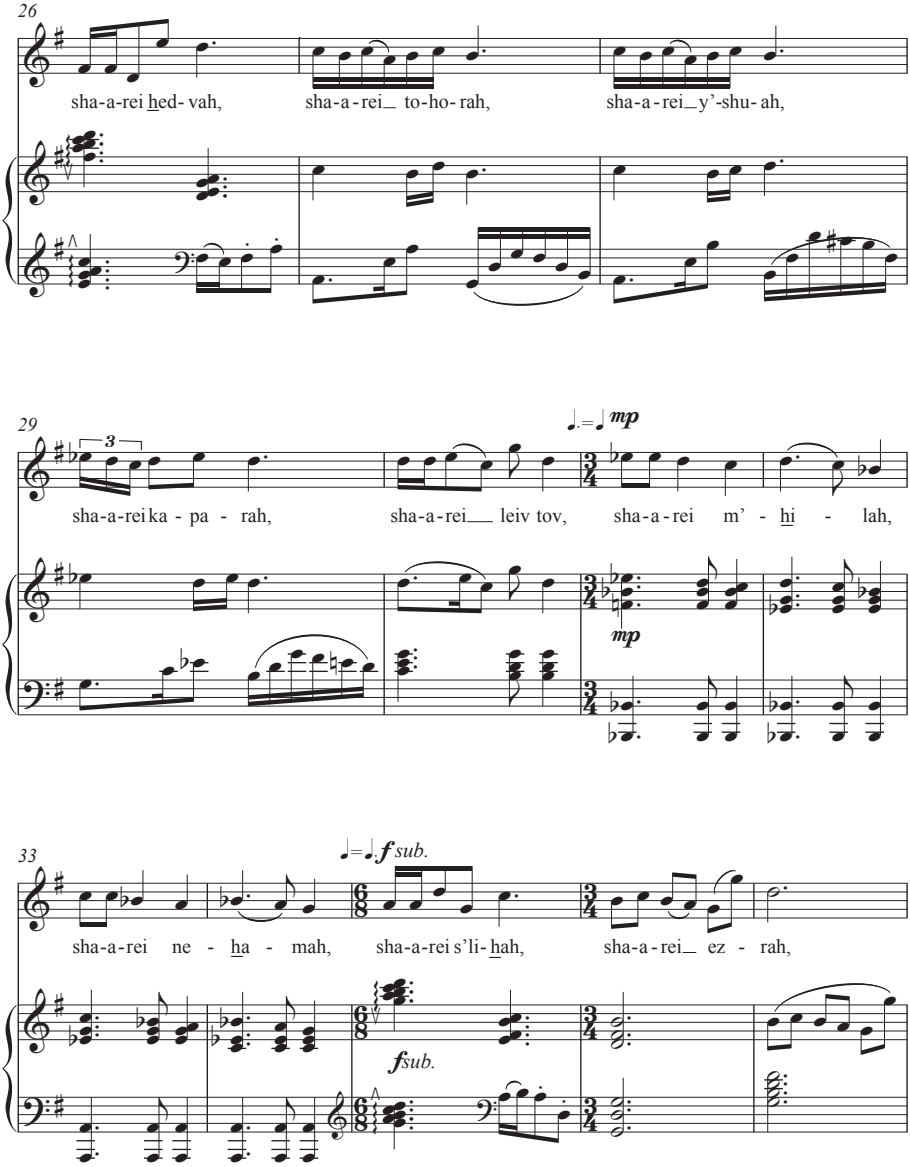
VI. Pit-hu Lanu

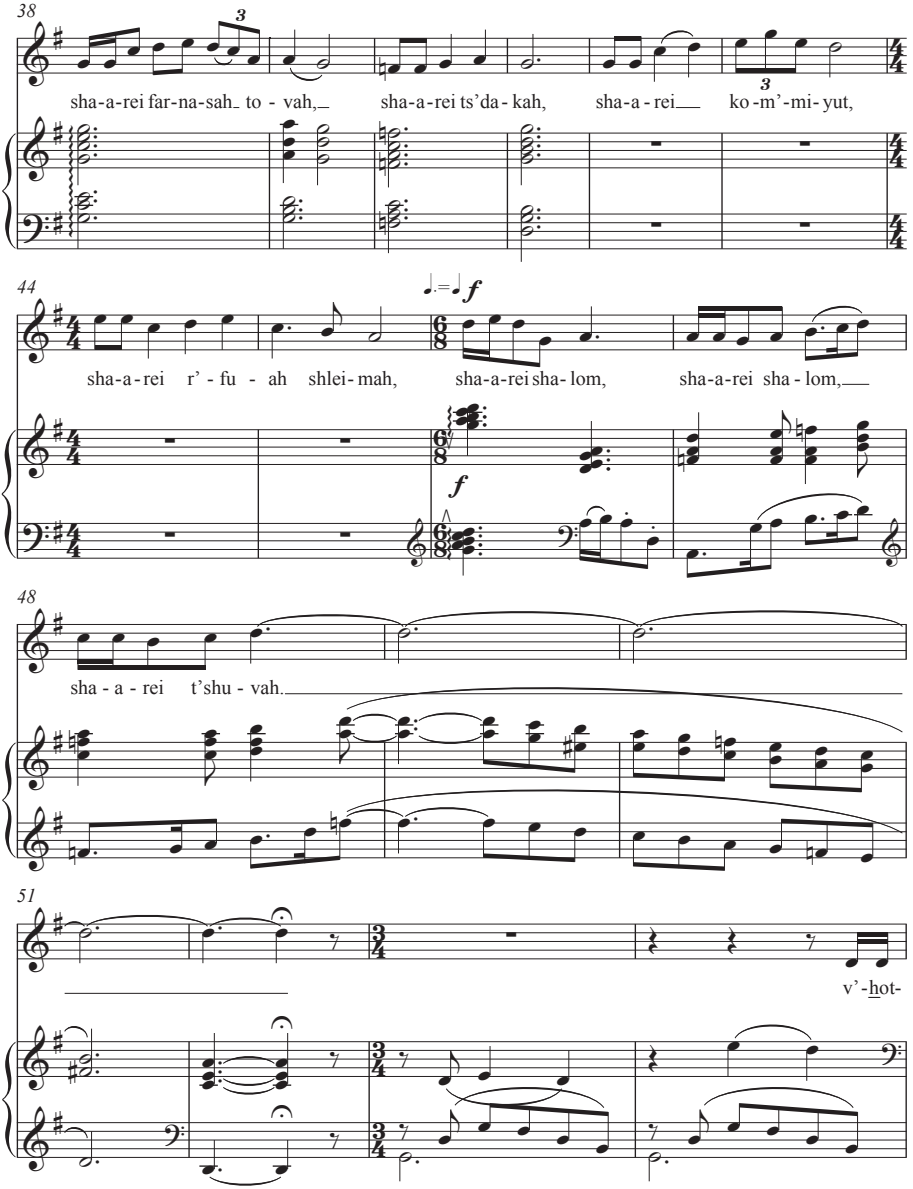
Text: Neilah Liturgy

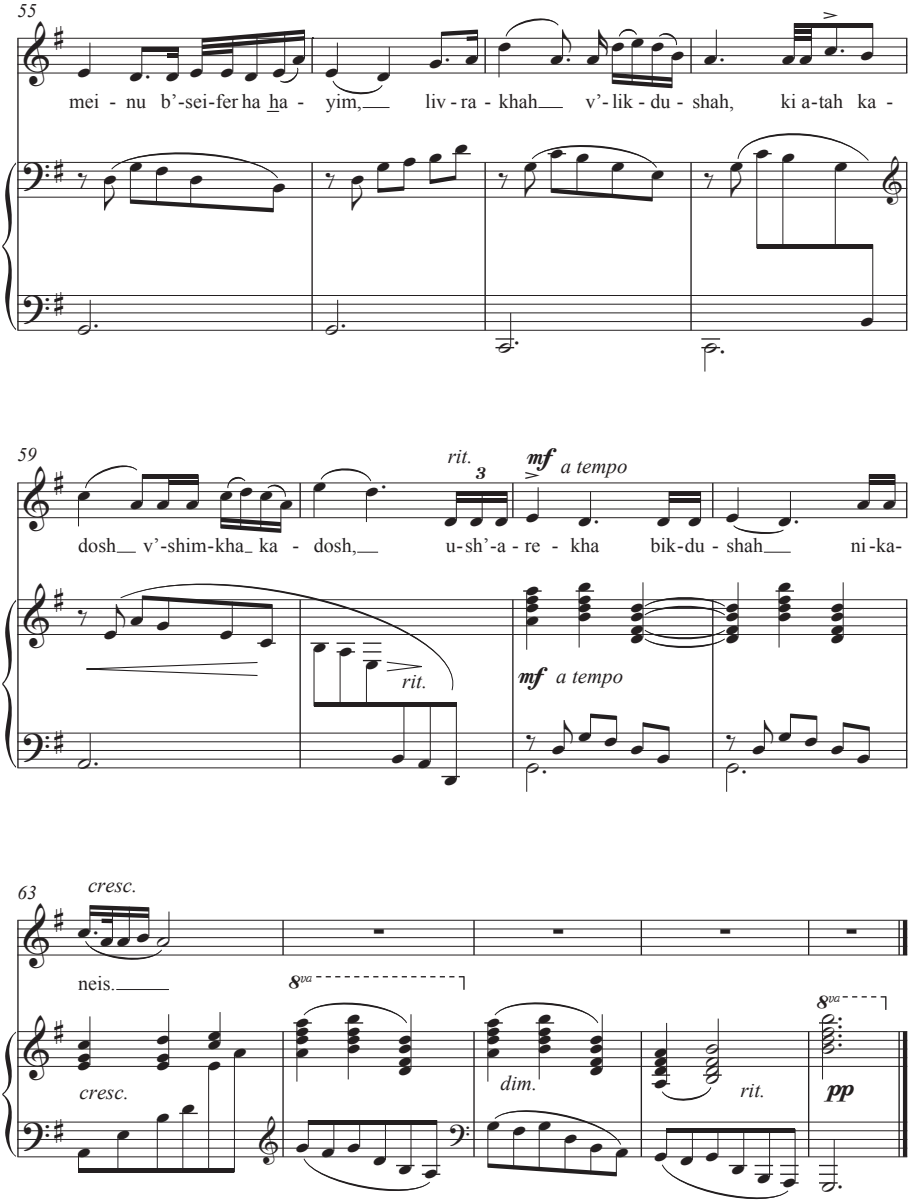
Music: Benjamin Maissner
Arrangement: Yefim Adler, 1995




15
mf
3
p'-tah la - nu u-l'-khol Yis - ra - eil a - me-kha b'-khol ma - kom
mf
19
f
sha-a-rei o - rah, sha-a-rei v'ra-khah, sha-a-rei gi - lah,
f
22
3
mp cresc.
sha - a-rei di-tsah, sha-a-rei hod v'-ha-dar, sha-a-rei va-ad tov, sha-a-rei z'khu-yot,
mp cresc.
f


26
sha-a-rei hed- vah,
sha-a-rei_ to-ho- rah,
sha-a-rei_y'-shu- ah,
29
3
sha-a-rei ka - pa - rah,
sha-a-rei__ leiv tov,
mp
sha-a-rei m' - hi - lah,
mp
33
f sub.
sha-a-rei ne - ha - mah,
sha-a-rei s'li- hah,
sha-a-rei_ ez - rah,
f sub.


38
sha-a-rei far-na-sah_ to - vah,_ sha-a-rei ts'da - kah, sha-a - rei___ ko - m'-mi- yut,
44
sha-a-rei r' - fu - ah shlei- mah, sha-a-rei sha- lom, sha-a-rei sha - lom,___
48
sha - a - rei t'shu - vah.
51
v'-hot-


55
mei - nu b'-sei-fer ha ha - yim, liv - ra - khah v'- lik - du - shah, ki a-tah ka -
59
rit.
3
mf a tempo
dosh v'-shim-kha ka - dosh, u-sh'-a - re - kha bik-du - shah ni-ka-
rit.
mf a tempo
63
cresc.
neis.
8va
cresc.
dim.
rit.
8va
pp

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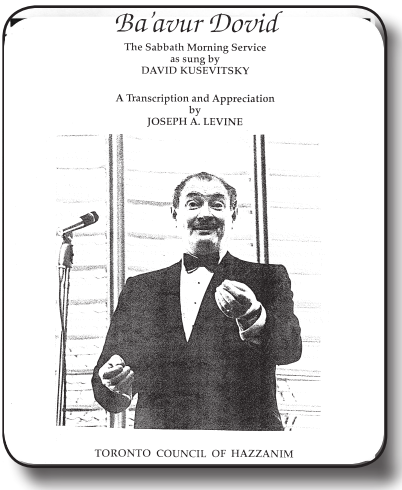

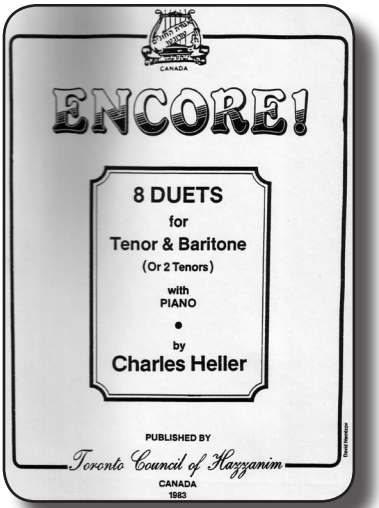

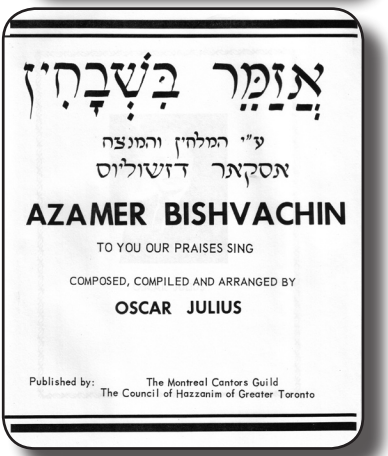

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- ***Mesiras Nefesh*: dancing in the face of death**
- **The nature of *Hasidic prayer***
- **Hasidism in *Jazz***
- ***Hasidim and Misnagdim*: Vilna between the wars**
- **The musical world of *Shin An-Sky***

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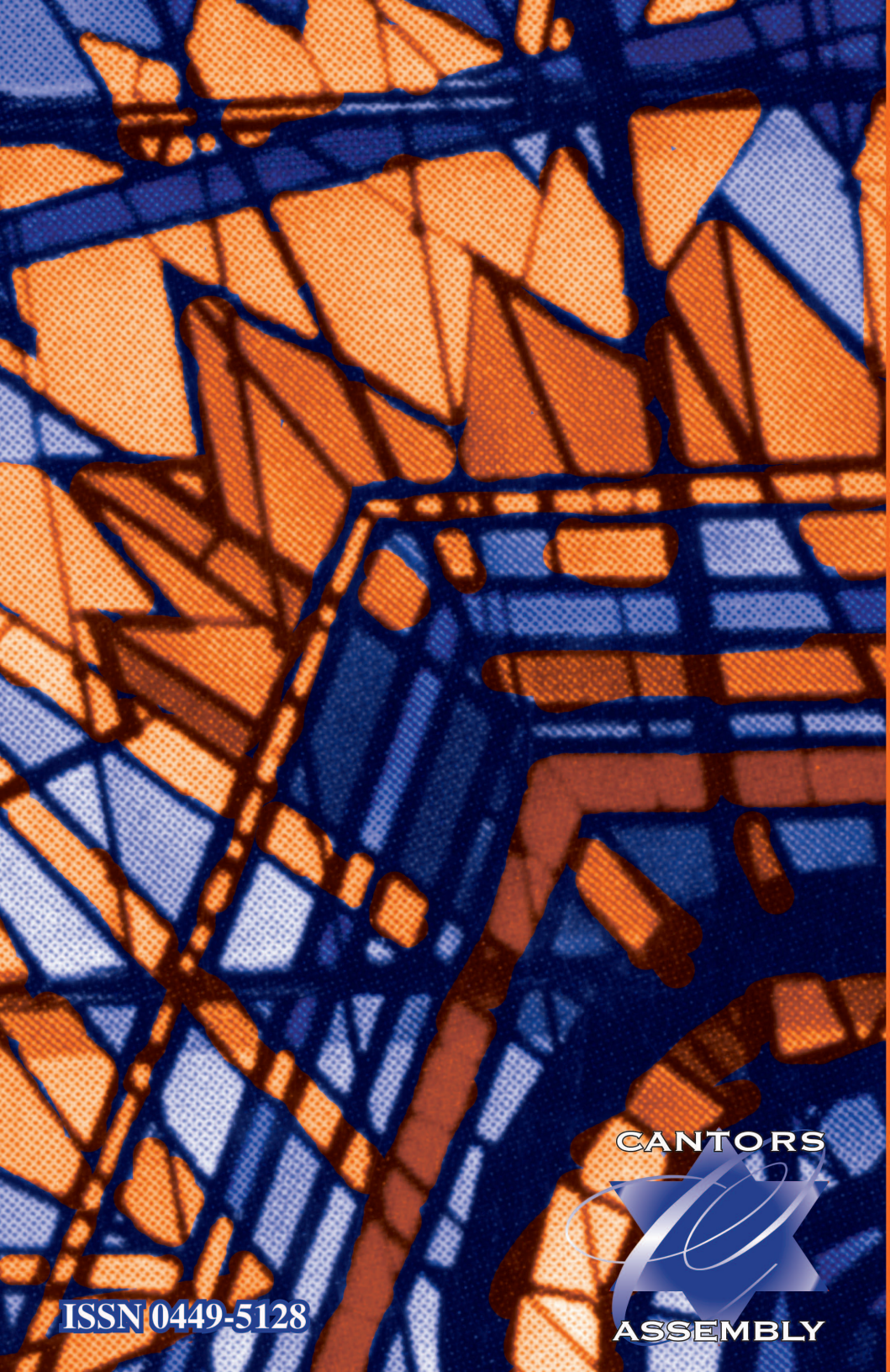

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